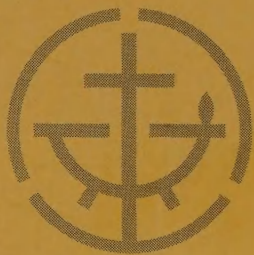




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THE
CONNECTION
BETWEEN THE
SACRED WRITINGS AND THE LITERATURE
OF
Jewish and Heathen Authors,
PARTICULARLY THAT OF THE
CLASSICAL AGES,
ILLUSTRATED,
PRINCIPALLY WITH A VIEW TO EVIDENCE IN CONFIRMATION
OF THE TRUTH OF
REVEALED RELIGION.

~~~~~  
BY ROBERT GRAY, D. D.

PREBENDARY OF DURHAM AND OF CHICHESTER, AND  
RECTOR OF BISHOP WEARMOUTH.

~~~~~  
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

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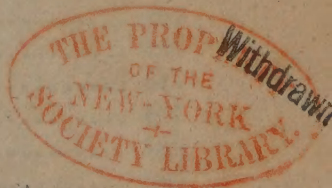
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CONNECTION

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CLASSICAL AGES

ILLUSTRATED

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BY ROBERT GRAY, D.D.

RECTOR OF LONDON AND OF CHESTER, AND
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

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ERRATA TO VOL. II.

- Page 82, line 10, *after inmate, read with man*
99, line 3, *after communication, add except by individuals*
130, line 8, *for perspicacious, read perspicuous*
172, note *, *before Alex. insert Clem.*
187, line 12, *for appears, read appear*
197, line 4, *for three knighted read three-nighted*
203, line 2, *after third, insert from*
291, line 19, *for grac read grace*
398, line 13, *for Jarisculan read Janiculan*



CHAP. I.

Preface to the Classics.

THE connection which subsisted between the Jews and the Heathen nations, has been very fully stated in the preceding part of this work, in order to illustrate the facilities which the Heathens enjoyed of deriving information from the chosen People. It has been shewn also, what opinions prevailed upon subjects universally important, and how apparently they were, in many instances, deduced from the records of Revelation, or the early reports of tradition, or from both. It is intended to prosecute, in the remaining chapters, a particular examination of those works of the Greek and Roman writers, which are characterized exclusively, by the denomination of the Classics, in order to point out what interest appertains to them in a religious point of view. The remark which was made with reference only to language, and to the as-

sertion of the superiority of the original Scriptures over translations of them, might be applied to this subject; and we might observe, with respect to the matter, as well as to the style of the sacred and classical writers, that the Hebrews drank of the fountain, the Greeks of the stream, and the Romans of the pools.

How copiously, and to what a remote distance the derivative communications flowed, was very early observed; and if the persuasions of some of the fathers were adopted, we might suppose all the knowledge of the Heathens to be a mere transfusion of revealed information.

Tertullian enquires, which of the poets, which of the sophists, did not drink altogether of the sacred source; and many other writers carried their opinions so far, as to maintain that the natural, as well as the moral philosophy of the Heathens, and even geometry and arithmetic, were drawn from the Scriptures. It is not improbable, as has been already observed, that* before the time of Alexander, much of the history and laws of the Jews was imparted by means of transla-

* Apologet. § 47. p. 36. Edit. Paris, 1664. Gales's Court of the Gentiles, lib. i. c. 2.

tions into Greek ; and the Septuagint version when it was made must have been highly valued *, since we are told by Philo, that an annual feast was observed in the isle of Pharos, with thanksgivings and rejoicings, in veneration of the place in which the version was made, which feast was resorted to by strangers as well as Jews, whose attention was attracted to it †.

In considering the passages which will be quoted from the works of individual writers, it is possible, that some which will be produced, as exhibiting a resemblance between sacred and prophane accounts, may appear precarious and questionable ; but if any particular passage should be rejected, the general conclusion of a great correspondence must be established, upon a collective view, both of the Grecian and Roman writers.

The author does not mean to assert that all the passages which bear a resemblance to those of Sacred Writ, were necessarily borrowed. Just and noble sentiments of God were every where excited by a contemplation of the works and laws of na-

* Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. ix. c. 6.

† De Mose. lib. ii. p. 140, l. Edit. Mangey.

ture—by the manifestation of Divine glory in the firmament of heaven—by the revolution of the celestial bodies and the succession of the seasons—by the variety of the productions of the earth, the order of their arrangement into system, the gradation and dependency of their several classes, and by the wonderful course of their renewal, with the characteristic differences of their kinds, from age to age.

Descriptions also of scenery, and of manners, which continued unchanged, through successive generations, were necessarily similar in proportion as they were faithful: coincidences may therefore be sometimes mentioned, to which little importance can be ascribed, as affording any proof of a connection between sacred and prophane writings, or as arguing imitation on the part of the latter. Moral precepts also, and popular proverbs of instruction, whether originally suggested by Divine wisdom, or produced by the feelings of men, and the reflections of experience, when once framed, were circulated in a natural course wherever communication existed.

But however certain instances of a conformity in these points, may be little re-

garded ; the comprehensive survey of all the proofs which will be taken in the present work, will exhibit more than an occasional perusal of the classics could have led the reader to expect, and will afford sufficient evidence to justify the conviction that Heathen literature is deeply indebted to Revelation. Wherever there is an extended view of the discoveries of the ancient world, we behold the rays of Divine Light, gleaming through the mists which prevail and overspread the prospect.

The proofs which remain to be adduced from classical writers, in order to establish this conviction, will, it is presumed, add to the interest which their works possess, and excite to the farther examination of the hidden treasures which they contain. The Heathen writers often so kneaded, and worked together the wisdom which they borrowed, that it is not easy to discover to what extent they were assisted : every particle, however, of knowledge which their works contain, derived from, or confirming revelation, has its value. Providence has ordained the preservation of documents sufficient to ascertain the history, chronology, geography, and manners of ancient times, and to cha-

racterize almost every period, (an acquaintance with which is important to the evidence of revelation,) by the productions either of contemporary, or of impartial and indisputable, authority. It becomes us to make a right use of these remains of antiquity, which have floated down the stream of time ; to examine the shield and the helmet, in order to ascertain what is of Divine workmanship, rather than as is too often done, to magnify with undue admiration, the powers and the virtues of the Pagan heroes who bore them. The classical compositions which we possess, have been preserved for our advantage, not that we should perpetuate their delusions, or become accustomed to the impurities which they describe, but that we may behold in them additional proofs of the necessity of revelation and additional testimonies to its claims. It has too often happened, that men whose principles are as vicious as their taste, have studied works, which should be regarded only as the records of human corruption, with a view to indulge a depraved imagination. Such are ever ready to offer an excuse for the polluted systems of Heathen superstition ; and while they affect to develope a refined morality from under

the mysteries of a vague and fanciful mythology, it is evident, that they are desirous only of gratifying a weak and splenetic hatred against the pure and indestructible religion by which those systems were broken in pieces. Such men, like some licentious travellers who visit Herculaneum, Pompeii, and the museums in which the monuments of ancient art discovered in those towns, are deposited after being cleared from the lava, under which for ages they have been buried and preserved, seem occupied only, in contemplating with a puerile and offensive curiosity, the disgusting objects which sculpture and painting were too often employed to represent, in times of darkness and ignorance—times in which surely it may have sufficed for man to have wrought “the will of the
“Gentiles.”

CHAP. II.

Hesiod.

THERE has been much difference of opinion as to the comparative antiquity of Hesiod and Homer; each has alternately been thrown back into remoter periods by different writers, and sometimes they have been represented as contemporary, and competitors *.

Adopting, in this instance, the chronology of the learned Dr. Hales, who has minutely investigated the subject, we shall consider Hesiod as the most ancient writer, and as having lived about 27 years † before Homer. His works, indeed, bear the character of earlier production, and of a ruder age than the Iliad and the Odyssey.

We may suppose him therefore to have lived about 911 years ‡ before the time of

* Hesiod Vit. ex Girald. de Poetar. Hist.

† Hales's New Analysis of Chronology, vol. i. p. 241.

‡ Ibid.

Christ, and about 272 years after the siege of Troy, (fixing, with Hales, that event at B. C. 1183,) a calculation supported by the authority of the Parian marbles, though it ascribes a higher antiquity to the poet than is assigned to him by Sir Isaac Newton, who states him to have flourished 884 years before the Christian era, and within 110 or 120 years of Solomon, and one generation from the siege of Troy, which he places at a later period, than that which is usually assigned to it.

Hesiod, indeed, has been understood to speak of himself, as having lived in the generation or age which succeeded the Trojan war; but Hales gives a different construction of the passage, and represents him to speak of a race of men distinguished by peculiar qualities, and not merely of a generation *, and therefore not to affirm any thing inconsistent with the period, which he assigns to the siege of Troy †.

The poet was an inhabitant of Ascra, in Bœotia, to which place his father had retired from Cumæ, one of the Æolian islands, now called Foia Nuova, in consequence of

* Γένος not γένεσις.

† Hales, vol. i. p. 33.

some distress. In early life he followed the humble occupation of a shepherd; he speaks with affecting complaint of the wintry climate and miserable city in which his fortune had placed him; and he appears afterwards to have moved to Locris, near Mount Parnassus, consecrating, by his abode there, a spot ever after sacred in fiction to the daughters of Memory and Jove, where future poets might drink the streams of inspiration. He seems to have been a man of great moderation and liberality of mind, much alive to the sensibilities of filial and fraternal tenderness, and entertaining a high respect for religious and moral principles.

There are two chief poems of this author still extant, the "Generation of the Gods," and the "Works and Days," besides a smaller poem, entitled "Days," not to mention a piece suspected to be spurious, entitled the "Shield of Achilles," and some fragments of disputed character. Pausanias also speaks of a poem of Hesiod called "the Catalogue of Women*."

The two principal poems are valuable monuments of antiquity, and exhibit pleasing

* Lib. i. c. 43. p. 103.

marks of a venerable simplicity of manners. The poet seems to have been desirous of exciting a religious spirit and a love of agriculture, adopting moral views of softening the disposition by leading men to cultivate the peaceful arts of life. The works are interspersed with just and pleasing reflections, and animated by a spirit of piety honourable to his character. One design in his *Works and Days*, is said to have been to wean his brother from idle pleasures, and to excite in him a love of industry and virtue*. It is related of Seleucus Nicator†, that he so much delighted in it, that the book was found placed beneath his head after his death.

Hesiod seems to have had some general notions of the creation of the world, but the theogony which he furnished, exhibits something of the outline of that wild and fanciful theory, which appears in the Indian mythologies, and under many representations of oriental nations, with respect to the birth of Erebus and Night, or the generating principles from which the universe was produced. The system of things which he attempts to develope, is as confused as the chaos from

* Fabricius in Hesiod. Fragment.

† Hephæst. lib. v. ap. Phot. Cod. 190.

which it is raised, and it is not easy to understand his description. He states that Chaos first existed; and next in order, Earth, Tartarus, and Love; that Erebus and Night arose likewise from Chaos, and by their conjunction produced Æther and Day. After which the heaven and celestial bodies were generated by the earth, as were the mountains and the barren sea, and afterwards the ocean by union of the earth and the heavens*.

Some have thought that the system of Hesiod had a reference to the primeval state of the world in its moral history; but others discover nothing in this strange and fanciful cosmogony, but the broken fragments of tradition, and the illusions of a vain philosophy,

“ The discordant seeds of things not well joined.”

Hesiod furnishes us with an account of the birth of man, and of those fictitious personages of poetry, who float in the airy visions of Grecian mythology; and by representing, not only Thea, and Rhea, and Themis, and Mnemosyne, and the race of

* *Θεογονία*, v. 116, &c.

Cyclops and Giants, but Thetis and Saturn, and the other gods, as the children of heaven and earth, originating from monstrous conjunctions, and carrying on unnatural strife and discord, he gives a derivation and recency to their origin, which accords well with the assigned manner of their generation and with their character, and demonstrates how little of real knowledge the Greeks possessed in the time of Hesiod. As we look back to remote times, we behold the celestial and the earthly lines blending in one horizon, and no eye can discriminate their respective boundaries.

Cudworth affirms that the generation of the gods, which Hesiod describes, is, that of the inferior gods only; ΖΕΥΣ, or Jupiter, being excepted out of the number; Hesiod, as well as Homer, considering him as the father and king of gods.

“ For he is the king and ruler of all the
 “ immortal gods; the creator of men and
 “ all things*.”

The theory of heaven framed by Hesiod, and the description of the deities with which

* *Αυλος γαρ*. Cudworth, b. i. c. 4.

he peopled the celestial mansions, became the popular system of superstition.

They, however, who obtained information from purer sources, were offended at fancies so preposterous and wild. In proportion as they caught a glimpse of truth, their minds rejected falsehood. Pythagoras feigned that he had seen the soul of Hesiod, in the infernal regions, bound to a brazen column, and shrieking from the pain which he endured for having fabricated calumnies against the gods*.

Hesiod, in his representation of preceding times, describes four ages, and an intermediate period, marked with their distinct emblems, and characterized by the terms of gold and silver, brazen and iron, in a manner which reminds us of the image furnished in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, which portrayed, under the same metallic distinction of its parts, the four great empires of the world†.

Hesiod, in his first age, represents a virtuous race of men to have existed under the dominion of Saturn, free from care, and labour, and sorrow, in heavenly abodes, en-

* Laert. lib. viii. § 11.

† Dan. xi.

joying length of days, and abundance of fruits*, and social pleasures devoid of all evil.

In analogy to the accounts of Scripture, Hesiod represents this period to have been succeeded by a silver age, in which the lives of men were shortened; and they became exposed to folly, injustice, and mutual injuries, manifesting a neglect of the gods.

Mr. Mitford imagines that the two first ages of Hesiod preceded the Deluge, and that the golden period referred only to the state of man in Paradise. It included however the time in which men began to multiply, and Hales contends therefore that the golden age exhibited an imperfect tradition of the whole period, both before, and after the Fall, comprehending the patriarchal state of our first parents, and likewise the pure line of Seth, until his descendants, "the sons of God," (so styled from their superior piety,) about the age of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, began to be corrupted by

* Ἀφνειοὶ μῆλοισι, literally, "rich in apples;" some read, "rich in flocks," alluding to the pastoral character of the age. Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι, lib. 116. Gen. iv. 2. Plato, Συμπόσιον, lib. v. c. 10. Edit. Stephan. 1578. Lucret. lib. v.

their promiscuous intermarriages with “the daughters of men,” of the apostate Cainite race *.

The diminution of the standard of human life in the silver age, applies to the period after the Flood; and this age, therefore, probably, succeeded the Deluge, and extended to the colonization of the earth in the days of Peleg.

Mitford and Hales agree in considering the three succeeding ages of Hesiod as referring to Greece only.

The brazen age related to the early state of turbulence and insecurity, when the first colonies from Asia, Phœnicia, and Egypt, settled in Greece, and when as Hesiod describes, men were fierce, strong, and addicted to arms. It was then that the rape of Io, and that of Europa took place, and men perished without renown, having no sacred poet to celebrate their fame †. This age terminated, as these writers suppose, with a second flood, which was merely local, and happened at a later period than is as-

* Gen. vi. 1, 2. Jud. iv. Hales's New Analysis of Chronology, vol. i. p. 40.

† Horat. lib. iv. ode 9. l. 25—9.

signed to the deluge; for Apollodorus and Proclus state, that Jove sent a flood to destroy the men of the brazen age *.

After this, Hesiod speaks of an intermediate age of heroes or demigods, who carried on war at Thebes and Troy, and after death were conveyed to the isles of the blessed.

This age was a glorious period described by poets and historians, and commenced, according to Hales, with Deucalion's Flood, B. C. 1548, and it ended before Christ 1183.

The iron age, in which Hesiod laments that he was born, is described by him to have next succeeded; in which incessant labour and misery were sustained with heavy cares; in which discord between parents and children, violence, plunder, and disregard of the gods, envy and calumny prevailed; and in which premature age, and accelerated death took place, and modesty and justice forsook the earth.

Hesiod intimates his expectation of a sixth race at a period in which it might be desirable to live.

Josephus cites Hesiod among authors who

* Scholia, in Hom. Iliad, l. i. b. 10.

recorded that the first man lived a thousand years *. It is probable that he referred only to passages which generally admit the longevity of men in primeval times.

Hesiod's account of Pandora, who was endowed with gifts from the gods to deceive Epimetheus, though he was warned against the danger, and who deprived mankind of all good, leaving only hope, is supposed by Hales, in conformity to the opinion of many writers, to be an allegorical fiction, built on the circumstances of the fall, which introduced all evil, and left men destitute of every thing but the hope of redemption, through the seed of the woman.

The poet, in his *Theogony*, mentions the cruel serpent, who, in the obscure parts of the earth, guarded the golden apples in spacious borders, alluding, there can be little doubt, to some descriptions of the serpent, near the tree in Paradise †.

There are striking passages in Hesiod, the general spirit of which reminds us of the strains of inspired piety.

In the beginning of his *Works and Days*, he calls, by a solemn invocation, on the

* *Antiq. lib. i. c. 3. p. 14.*

† *L. 334, 335.*

Pierian muses, to sing their hymns in praise of their Divine Father, by whom mortal men, whether obscure or distinguished, ignoble or celebrated, were created; for that Jove easily strengthened the weak, and easily subdued the strong; easily diminished the confident, and encreased the lowly; easily corrected the perverse, and weakened the proud*.

He inculcates the salutary instruction, that riches are not to be sought by violence, since such bring down destruction from the gods, and the ruin of families, and that riches so obtained endure but for a little time†.

He inveighs also against adultery, the fraudulent deception of orphans, and irreverence to parents, with great animation, and with threats of Divine vengeance‡.

In the spirit however of Heathen error, he recommends the withholding of friendly offices from an enemy, delivering sentiments very similar to some which are alluded to as defective by our Blessed Lord; teaching men to love those that loved them; and to hate those that hated them§; to give to him

* L. 3. 7.

† Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι, l. 320. 326.

‡ L. 330. 333.

§ Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέραι, l. 353. 355; see also l. 715.

that hath given, and not to give to him that hath not given: precepts very different from and corrected by those which the Gospel enjoins.

There are passages in Hesiod which much resemble some in Homer, and which seem to argue an imitation on one side or the other. This particularly appears in the use of Oriental expressions and forms of speech*. Some of the names in Hesiod are of Phœnician etymology.

* Zach. Bogan. in Hesiod, *Ομηρίων*. Oxon. 1658. et Eustath.

CHAP. III.

Homer.

CONSIDERING Homer as the most distinguished writer of Heathen antiquity, and as having flourished among the earliest, if he were not himself the earliest of the classical writers, we must look with particular earnestness to examine whether any fragments of Revealed Knowledge or any scattered relations of Sacred History, are to be found in his poems.

It may be observed, that Clement of Alexandria supposes Homer to have lived five hundred years after the siege of Troy, subsequently to the time of Orpheus, from whom he conceives him to have borrowed *; and Suidas asserts, that he drew the plan of his Iliad from Corinnus, who wrote a poem upon the subject of the war of Dardanus

* Strom. lib. i. p. 389.

against the Paphlagonians at the time the city was besieged *.

These accounts are not of sufficient authority to overturn the statement of Herodotus and others, who represent Hesiod and Homer as the earliest of the Grecian writers †. We may suppose, therefore, in agreement with the opinion of Hales ‡, that Homer lived 27 years after Hesiod, in the Archonship of Diognetus, who began his office 893 years before Christ, and we may admit him to have flourished about 299 years after the siege of Troy, assigning that event to an era about 1183 years before the time of our Saviour, which is 264 years earlier than it is placed by Sir Isaac Newton.

Magical arts were employed, and even the shades of the dead were invoked, to determine where Homer was born. This point, however, was left undecided by antiquity, and is still a subject of controversy §. Without pretending to pronounce upon the

* Voce Κόρινθος.

† Herod. lib. ii. c. 53.

‡ New Analys. vol. i. p. 241.

§ Plin. lib. xxx. c. 2. Tatian cont. Græc. Biblioth. Pat. vol. i. p. 180. Edit. Par. 1624. Heliodor. Æthiop. lib. iii. Justin Martyr, &c.

claims of the different cities, we may observe, that the suffrage of opinion appears to predominate in favour of Smyrna*, though the life of Homer, said to have been compiled by Herodotus, which supports that opinion, cannot be regarded as genuine. Wood has drawn an ingenious argument to prove that Homer was a native of Asia, from some appearance of the effects of early local impressions on his mind, which are discoverable in his works. Some writers, however, fancied that he was born in Egypt †: he appears to have visited that country, and it is probable that he obtained there his knowledge of those events and circumstances, which tradition had brought down, in consistency with the accounts of Scripture.

The attempts, which have been made, within these few years, to shake the long established foundations of 'Troy, and to destroy that belief of its existence which rests on the concurrent testimony of history, appear to have entirely failed; and the heaven-built city, with all its scenes and circum-

* Strabo, lib. xiv. p. 925. Edit. Falcon.

† Heliodor. *Æthiop.* lib. ii. c. 6. p. 126.

stances, continues to interest every mind; not as the fictitious vision of a poetic fancy, but as the real and substantial seat of empire, which had a local habitation and a name.

Supposing the siege to have taken place at the early period before stated, (1183 B. C.) we may, with Plato, consider the city as having flourished in connection with, or as a dependency on the first Assyrian empire, and it might have been destroyed about 30 years before the death of Sampson. Diodorus, after Ctesias *, relates, that Teutamus, the 26th sovereign in succession from Ninus, who reigned about the period assigned to the siege, sent a considerable number of troops to the assistance of the Trojans, under the command of Memnon, son of Tithonus †. Homer is silent upon the subject of this great empire: he is, however, more exact and circumstantial in enumerating the Grecian forces, than those of the Trojans and their allies.

Many points of resemblance, between the descriptions, sentiments, and expressions of

* Lib. ii. p. 136. Edit. Wessellin.

† See Rollin Histoire des Assyriens, tom. ii. p. 42. Plato de Legibus, lib. iii. p. 685.

Homer, and those of Scripture, have been noticed ; and Sir Walter Raleigh considers it as indisputable, that the poet must have read over all the Books of Moses, and borrowed many passages word for word*.

Whatever similitude, however, on general points, may be observed, as far as respects the existence and direction of a controlling Providence ; the formation of man from the earth ; and his future existence in a state of reward and punishment : and whatever general conformity of sentiment and expression may occasionally be discovered, still our conviction of Homer's having obtained some knowledge of the Inspired Writings, must be built on the general sketch of what may be alledged in confirmation of this persuasion, rather than on a specification of any particular passage.

Animated by his own bold and original genius, and distinguished above all writers for his inventive powers, this sublime and delightful poet, in the comprehensive views of what his observation and research presented, seized and appropriated what he beheld ; moulding it by his own combinations to a new form ; and fixing his undivided attention

* See also Duport. *Homeri Gnomolog.* Cantab. 1660.

upon the subject before him, (particularly in the *Iliad*, produced as it was in the full vigour of his genius), he discarded whatever was foreign to his purpose.

The *Odyssey* furnished most scope for his discursive fancy: this work, composed probably in his old age, consists principally of narration, it being written, as Longinus has observed, when, like the setting sun, he was verging to his decline.

In the historical digressions of this poem, however, we trace no direct connection with the events of Sacred History.

When the poet, indeed, soared into the regions of early fable, or intruded into the mansions of the gods, he touched upon circumstances which had been founded upon tradition, as the rebellion of the giants, and the ejection of Vulcan, and of Ate, or Discord, who were precipitated from heaven*. These points have been before mentioned, as bearing some reference to accounts of the frantic attempt to build the tower of Babel, and to the intimations furnished in Scripture with respect to the fall of Lucifer.

Considering the machinery of Homer, as

* Arnob. *adver. Gen.* lib. vii.

exhibiting, if not the earliest, at least the most interesting system of classical mythology, which antiquity has bequeathed to us, we may naturally expect to discover, in the objects of superstition which he has disclosed, many proofs of that imitation of the characters of Oriental history, which we know to have prevailed among the Greeks; allusions, indeed, to circumstances of sacred record are occasionally made both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

The disposition, however, to discover allusions where no reference or connection probably existed, has been carried to an extravagant extent.

The commentators, who discerned the origin and perfection of every art and science in Homer, seemed equally inclined to detect in every part an acquaintance with those facts and circumstances which chiefly interested their regard as involved with the evidence of revelation: hence a very general persuasion seems to have existed, of some concealed history being contained in the poems of Homer, under an exterior of fictitious circumstances.

Thus, for instance, Franciscus Blanchinus pretends that the poet, under the names of

his deities, described existing sovereigns and people; supposing Jupiter to have represented a king of Æthiopia or Arabia, in Egypt; Juno, the kingdom of Syria; Neptune, that of Caria; Apollo, that of Assyria; and so of others*. Cræsius, who discerned Sacred Inscriptions in every monument, found, in the descriptions of Homer, a detail of the history of the Israelites to the time in which they subdued the land of Canaan under the command of Joshua, conceiving it to be disguised under foreign representations, and blended with feigned circumstances, and considering the names, however different from those of Hebrew etymology, as having the same signification†.

This writer imagines the Odyssey, to which he assigns the earliest and highest rank, to shadow out the events, which occurred to the Patriarchs and Israelites, from the going out of Lot from Sodom, to the death of Moses, on Mount Nebo; and the Iliad to contain a disguised relation of the attack and fall of Jericho, and other cities of

* Fabricius *Homeri Doctrin.* lib. ii. c. 6.

† Cræsius *Homero Hebræo, sive Hist Hebræorum ab Homero.* See Fabrici. *Homeri Doctrin.*

Canaan, by Joshua and the Israelites, with the addition of various circumstances.

Another penetrating writer is so anxious to constrain Homer into the service of religion, and to render him instrumental to the indulgence of his own prejudices, that he supposes him to have been endued with a prophetic spirit, and to have predicted by a divine suggestion, under the fiction of the Trojan story, and the Grecian fables, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the life, miracles, and passion of our Saviour, together with the events of the primitive Church under the emperors: and he pushes the absurd theory so far as to imagine that the poet satirized the Dutch nation, under the description of the Harpies; Martin Luther, under the characters of Antinous and Leiodes, the augur suitors of Penelope; Calvin, under another personage; and the Lutherans, under the designation of the Lotophagi*; conceits so chimerical and ludicrous as not to have deserved mention, if they had not been thought entitled to serious refutation by some worthy Protestant†.

* Jacob King's vera Hist. Rom. 4to. Rom. 1655.

† Eberti Rudolph. Rothii. Exercit. Edit. Jenæ.

The general representations given by the poet, with respect to prayer, prophecy *, sacrifice, lustration, and religious rites, seem to intimate an acquaintance with, or some direct or indirect imitation of the ceremonies and institutions which are sanctioned by Revelation. The convictions also with regard to a prophetic spirit, foretelling future events at the hour of death, should seem to have originated in circumstances recorded in Scripture. Homer likewise specifies three modes of inspiration agreeably to the sacred accounts †.

In the generation of his Deities, Homer gives them an origin little more exalted than that which Hesiod ascribes to them. They seem raised from the ocean, or watery chaos, or born of parents subsequent to the creation. It has been supposed, however, that Jupiter is not included, nor was understood to be included in the general Theogony ‡, but was himself the Creator, or Father of Gods and men,

* “ Unde porro ista divinatio?” “ Sed quæ ista intellecta sunt, a philosophis debeo discere, præsertim cum pluribus de rebus ista divini mentiantur. Unde oriatur (sc. divinatio) non intelligo.” Cicero de Natur. Deor. lib. iii. § 6.

† Iliad. lib. i. v. 62, 63.

‡ Plutarch de Isid. et Osirid. Arist. de Repub. lib. i. c. 12. and Cudworth, ch. iv. p. 360.

the ruler over inferior Deities. Nevertheless, he appears often actuated by human passions, and addicted to sensual pleasures*. The Gods, divested of the fictitious imagery in which they are dressed, may be considered as merely personifications of the elements, or of the passions; but they are described with qualities, and dignified with the reputation of actions, which we know to have been transcribed from real characters and events.

In the mythology employed to adorn his works, Homer conforms to the persuasions of popular credulity, and adopts the superstition of his time, exhibiting every where the grossest improbabilities, scarcely concealed by the drapery and embellishments of fancy thrown over them. The sublime eloquence, however, of the poet, raised by reflection on the Divine nature, and by some dispersed notices scattered by the teachers of revealed truth, occasionally encircles Jupiter with a majesty borrowed from the manifestations of the true God †. He describes him as the supreme and most powerful being, subject only to fate as an unerring rule of rectitude,

* Clem. Alex. Cohort. ad Gent. vol. i. p. 28. Edit. Potter.

† Iliad. lib. ii. l. 117. Pausan. Cor. c. 7. p. 126. Edit.

possessing infinite wisdom, and beholding under one comprehensive view the past, the present, and the future. He seems to speak of him as the Creator of heaven and earth, of the sea, and of all the wonders which they contain*. They, however, who read Homer in the beautiful translation of Pope, will suppose the poet to speak with more sacred dignity of expression than the original work strictly warrants us to admit: the translator's mind having been familiar with the diction of the Scriptures, he sometimes, unconsciously, applies to the Heathen deities expressions which bear the stamp of inspiration, and which are consecrated in the hallowed language of the Bible.

Still, however, considering the imperfect views which Homer entertained with respect to the Divinity in general, we are not surprized that he sometimes exposed himself to censure, by degrading representations of his deities, and by introducing them upon trivial occasions; not only when, with mock solemnity, he described them as taking a part in the ludicrous battles between the frogs and

* See the description of the Shield of Achilles, and *Præp. Evan. lib. xiii. c. 13. p. 674. Edit. Par. 1627.*

the mice, in a work ascribed to him by the writer of his life *, and by Martial, but also on occasions of little importance in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Notwithstanding this apparent levity and prophaneness, which, together with the unsatisfactory representations which he made of the state of the dead, occasioned his works to be excluded from Plato's republic, the general sentiments of his epic poems breathe a strain of unaffected piety, and an admiration of the works of nature, favourable to the impressions of virtue.

The sentiments also which he expresses, with respect to Divine admonitions and warnings imparted to mankind, and with regard to the perverse dispositions of men †, their free-will, and unconstrained adoption of evil, a consistent with truth, and agreeable to the declarations of Scripture.

The morality which pervades the works of Homer, though often exceptionable, is of an elevated cast, and excellent in its general tendency. It extends to the highest departments of life, and details its minutest offices. It embraces the maxims of political justice,

* Herod. in Vit. Homer. c. 2. et Martial.

† Vid. *Odys.* lib. i. l. 32—43.

prescribing rules which should direct princes and subjects. If it inspires in the *Iliad* a martial ardour, it is still tempered by instruction, which inculcates moderation and forbearance, which illustrates the baneful effects of anger and revenge, and inspires a love of justice, benevolence, and pity.

In the *Odyssey*, while we repose amidst the scenes of private life, the poet describes the pleasing examples of fidelity, temperance, conjugal and filial affection, patriotism, and piety, contrasting every where the influence of virtue with that of vice.

He makes no reference to any tablet of a written law as to a rule in any part of his works, nor does he appeal to any prescribed code of instruction, but enforces the necessity of a monarchical power for the sanction of authority, and seems to consider that power, moderated by a council, as essential to protect society from the tyranny of the many. He drew, however, his principles of equity from some concealed sources of wisdom, with such manifestation of their importance, that his works became a basis of ethics; they were deposited by Alexander in the most valuable casket which his victories procured, and were collected and re-

vered by Lycurgus and Pisistratus as worthy the attention of legislators. His accurate statements gave such authority to his descriptions, that different states referred to his works to settle contests for territory, and to ascertain the rights of dominion; and the emperor Claudius often quoted from the tribunal the verses of Homer *.

If Alexander, Cæsar, and Pompey caught a spirit of enterprise from the works of Homer; they learnt from him also a generous forbearance, and a courtesy to the vanquished. He every where softens the rugged passions of war, by the detail of private feeling and the scenes of domestic sorrow. By observing what was natural to the affections of men, and every where interesting, he describes, with engaging display of character, the venerable claims of majesty, and age; the tenderness of parental and filial affection; and the excellencies of female virtue, in the virgin, the matron, and the widow.

When poetry described such examples as he presented, and such pictures as he portrayed, exhibiting every where what is most estimable amidst the ruins of a fallen nature,

* Sueton. in Tib. Claud. § 42. p. 631. Edit. Oudendorpii.

and the violence of rude and uncivilized times, "God was not left without a witness," and the moral strain of his writings, notwithstanding some defects *, may serve to furnish subject of contrast unfavourable to Christian poets, who employ their talents only to inflame the fancy and kindle the passions on the side of vice. Where, the poet, at so early a period of Greece, imbibed the mild precepts of benevolence, forbearance, and pity, which he recommends, and whence he drew the sketches of tranquil life, amidst the predatory warfare of unsettled states, it would be difficult now to determine. Many descriptions he undoubtedly furnishes, of manners civilized beyond the general state of his country, and of improvement in the arts and moral habits of life, carried to a higher pitch than we expect to find. He, like Ulysses, however, had visited countries more advanced than his own. Lactantius represents him to have borrowed from the Erythræan Sibyl, but this is only to suppose him to have had recourse to spurious sources of information, which afforded little more than might have been collected from oral tradition.

* Plutarch de audiendis Poetis.

That he had any acquaintance with the Sacred Books, would not be collected merely from the splendor of those passages which speak of the attributes of the Deity, and of the immortality of the soul. Experience and reflection might every where deduce and circulate some just and elevated sentiments upon these topics. There are particulars, however, which are not to be explained but upon a supposition of some acquaintance with written or traditionary memorials of truth.

The description of the shield of Achilles has been thought to argue some knowledge of the Mosaic account of the Creation *, and that of the garden of Alcinous to have been borrowed in some respects from what is related of Paradise †.

Be these admitted or not, we cannot but allow that the passage in the eleventh book of the Iliad, in which the Poet speaks of the rainbow as a wonder or sign (τέρας) of, or for man, fixed by Jove in the cloud ‡, corresponds with somewhat more than casual

* Clemens. Alex. Strom. lib. v. c. 255. p. 709.

† Comp. Odyss. lib. vii. l. 112. with Gen. ii. and lib. v. v. 70. with Gen. ii. 10.

‡ Compare Iliad, lib. xi. v. 28, with Gen. ix. 12, 13.

connection, with the account of the covenant which God made with Noah when he declared, “this is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is in the earth *;” it should be further observed also, that the bow was in general supposed to threaten war or some wintry tempest †, an apprehension which might possibly arise from some remembrance of the destruction of the waters which had overspread the earth.

The representation which Homer gives of a shepherd beholding, from a promontory, a dark cloud, coming with a western breeze from the sea, affords a pleasing illustration of those circumstances in nature which were commonly to be observed in Judea, and which were providentially made to concur with the appointments that took place in conformity to the prayer and expectation of Elijah, when there arose “a little cloud out of the sea like a man’s hand, which soon darkened the heavens with clouds and wind ‡.”

* Gen. ix. 17.

† Iliad, lib. xvii. v. 547.

‡ Compare Iliad, lib. iv. v. 275—8. with 1 Kings xviii. 42—46.

It may here be incidentally observed, that Homer, in speaking of a Mæonian, or Carian woman, dying ivory with purple, points to a country adjacent to Thyatira, in which St. Paul places the woman who was a seller of purple, as mentioned in the Acts*.

The representations of ancient manners scattered through the works of Homer, often call to our recollection the sacred descriptions of the Patriarchal ages. The fidelity with which he and the inspired writers characterize the several periods of which they speak, demonstrate the influence of climate and local circumstances in producing permanent effects, the operation of which is even to this day perceivable in the unaltered customs of the East; where a peculiar hospitality is exercised, the result, in some measure, of necessity, and where men elevated in rank, perform the offices of pastoral life, and menial occupation.

If no argument is to be built upon these correspondencies, there are nevertheless some particulars specified by the Poet which seem to have been drawn from a knowledge of the circumstances of the Patriarchal times, when

* Compare Iliad, lib. iv. v. 141. with Acts xvi. 14.

not, only a striking simplicity of manners prevailed, but indications of the especial care and intervention of Providence were manifested. Thus it is to be observed, not only are the daughters of the land sent out like Rebecca, to draw water and to offer it to the stranger*, but Alcinous speaks of deities descending openly and conversing with men who were acceptable to them, and of their sitting down and feasting with them whom they honoured. He makes mention also of their meeting and attending the solitary traveller on his road. In like manner one of the suitors of Penelope endeavours to check the brutal violence of Antinous, by observing that the gods, under the appearance of strangers, visited cities to inspect the wickedness and good conduct of men; representations which cannot but strongly remind us of the accounts given by Moses, when he speaks of the angels who came to Sodom at even, or of those who appeared to Abraham when he sat at the door of his tent, in the heat of the day, and who partook of his fare; or on another occasion, of those who met Jacob as he went on his way†.

* Gen. xxiv. 44.

† Ibid. xviii. 1. xix. 1. xxxii. 1.

Alcinous particularly represents the gods to be called down by the sacrifices and hecatombs which were offered up by those who preserved a similitude to their sacred race*, by truth and integrity. In the Book of Judges, it is stated, that the angel who appeared to Gideon, in his dejection for the oppression which the Israelites suffered, under the Midianites, commanded him to lay the flesh, with the unleavened cakes which he brought, upon the rock, when the angel, by putting forth the end of his staff, raised up fire out of the rock to consume them†. In another instance, the angel who appeared unto Manoah, directed him to offer his burnt offering unto the Lord, and ascended in the flame of the altar, so that he appeared no more‡.

The notions with respect to oracles and inspiration, and the persuasion expressed by Homer that dreams were derived from the Deity, and employed to impart Divine counsels to man, concur with convictions founded on the declarations of Scripture §.

The words of Agamemnon to Calchas

* Odyss. lib. vii. l. 199—205.

† Judges vi. 12. 20, 21.

‡ Ibid. xiii. 3—24.

§ Comp. Odyss. lib. i. v. 200—1. with Numb. xxii. 38.

charging him with always prophecying evil, much resemble those which Ahab used in speaking of Micaiah; and it may be observed with reference to the continuation of the sacred account given on the same occasion, that the poet represents the father of the gods to have employed a dream to delude Agamemnon to draw out his forces, with assurance that he should take the city; and M. Dacier remarks, that this delusion is similar to one employed by God for a judicial infatuation of Ahab, whom it misled to defeat and punishment*.

The introduction of the deities by Homer, gives an air of improbability to his poem, and he represents the subordinate gods in a degraded point of view. It has been stated, however, that the poet designed by these representations to intimate important truths of morality and religion. The intervention of supernatural beings was intended, it has been said, to impress the conviction that nothing was to be done without Divine aid; and the regard

* *Iliad*, lib. i. l. 106, 7. *2 Chron.* xviii. 18—20. Dacier upon Aristotle, c. 26. Pope's Notes on Homer, b. ii. l. 9. The age of Homer approaches so near to that of Ahab, that if he had any knowledge of the event in the history of that king, above referred to, it was probably derived from oral information.

manifested to individual heroes afforded illustrations of a particular providence *. Macrobius states that we are to understand that they were not the celestial gods who conversed with men, but some familiar genii, by whose assistance they were supported, as was conceived to have been the case with Pythagoras and Socrates. The representations of Homer with regard to a future state, are supposed to have been borrowed from the opinions of the Hebrews concerning Paradise as a place of perpetual joy, but the affinity is very slight. The promises of the inspired writers were figurative and general, and the popular and unwritten opinions of the Jews are not so defined as to enable us to discover much correspondence between them and the notions of the Greeks with respect to Elysium.

The heroes of the poet, who were deified, ascended to the celestial abodes to feast with the gods; and the regions of the dead, which Ulysses visited, were peopled with sullen and melancholy shades, mourning over the wounds, and resenting the injuries which they had sustained on earth.

* Cicero de Nat. Deorum, lib. ii. c. 66. p. 487.

The apostrophe in the beginning of the Song of Moses, "Give ear, O ye heavens, "and hear, O earth", the words of my "mouth," has been thought to be imitated by Homer in the adjuration which he describes Calypso to have uttered, and which has been admired as truly sublime.

"But hear, O earth, and hear ye sacred skies †."

The resemblance, however, is of too vague and general a nature to be much insisted on.

Homer represents Ulysses, when in Phœacia (Corcyra), to have expressed his anxiety concerning the character of the natives, in a manner which has been thought to resemble that of Abraham, when at Gerar, which was near to the Red Sea, to the south of Mount Casius‡. The poet considers insolence and injustice as opposite to the qualities produced by the fear of God, feeling apprehensions similar to that of the Patriarch, when he says, "I thought surely the fear of God "is not in this place §."

* Deut. xxxii. 1.

† Odyss. lib. v. l. 184. "Ἰστω νῦν τόδε γαῖα καὶ οὐρανός, and Grotius; see also Virgil, *Esto nunc Sol testis*.

‡ Strabo, lib. xvi. Gen. xx. 11. et Calmet.

§ Καὶ σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεοδής, Odyss. lib. vi. l. 121. Gen. xx. 11.

The conduct of the wife of Prætus, and that of Bellerophon, seems to have been taken in part from circumstances recorded in the history of Joseph*.

Homer states Vulcan to have framed tripods, which moved on living wheels, under the instinctive direction of a presiding spirit †, which fiction, as the critics have observed, bears a resemblance to the living creatures described in the vision of Ezekiel, which went, and the wheels with them, whithersoever the spirit was to go ‡; the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

The resemblance, however, must be casual, as Homer flourished long before the period of Ezekiel, who was carried captive with Jehoiachin about A. M. 3406.

There are other particulars which excite some attention.

Homer speaks of two urns on the floor of Jove, the one filled with evil gifts, the other with good, which having mixed he distributes, sometimes dealing out the evil, sometimes the good §; this reminds us of the re-

* Comp. Iliad, lib. vi. v. 160. et seq. with Gen. xxxix. 7—20. Comp. also Iliad, lib. vi. l. 168. with 2 Kings xxi. 8.; see also lib. x. v. 442. and Gen. xlii. 16.

† Lib. xviii.

‡ Ezek. i.

§ Lib. xxiv. l. 527—530.

presentation of the lxxvth Psalm: "For in
 " the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and
 " the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and
 " he poureth out of the same, but the dregs
 " thereof all the wicked of the earth shall
 " wring them out and drink them."

There are many parts in Homer, in which he brings forward his heroes as approaching to battle with a threat, similar to that expressed by David in advancing against Goliath: "Come to me, and I will give thy
 " flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the
 " beasts of the field *;" this language, however, was general and customary.

The selection of persons by lot, for objects of importance, and the joining of prayers with the ceremony usual among the Hebrews, appears in Homer to have been adopted by the Grecians †.

The sacred imagery of weighing the character and fate of men in the scales ‡, is to be found likewise in the Heathen poet §.

* 1 Sam. xvii. 44. et Iliad, lib. vi. l. 144. et passim.
 Comp. also Iliad, lib. xix. v. 109--11. and Gen. xlix. 10.

† Odyssey, lib. vii. l. 170--177.

‡ Job vi. 2. xxxi. 6. Psal. lxii. 9. Dan. v. 27.

§ Vide Iliad, lib. viii. l. 69--72. et lib. xxii. l. 209.
 Æschylus wrote a tragedy on the Weighing of Souls, in which he introduced Thetis and Aurora standing on either

The representation also of discomfiture, effected by thunder and storms employed by God, which is made in the Book of Samuel*, and in the Psalms†, is to be found in Homer‡.

The custom of giving gifts and dowry to the relations of the person sought in marriage, which prevailed among the Patriarchs§, seems to have continued in the time of Homer; it is at least alluded to by Agamemnon.

The description of the Syrens, in the 12th Book of the Odyssey, whose song was death, and who seduced to destruction those, who lingered near their coast, covered with the bones of those, who had fallen victims to their arts, has been thought to bear a resemblance to the representation of Solomon, in the viith and ixth chapters of Proverbs, in which the young man, void of understanding, is allured to destruction by the harlot, not knowing that the dead are there,

side of the scales of Jove, entreating each for her son while they fought. See Pope's Homer, note on L. l. 88.

* 1 Sam. vii. 10.

† Psalm xviii. 13.

‡ Iliad, lib. viii. l. 76, 77.

§ Gen. xxiv. 53. xxxiv. 12. 1 Sam. xviii. 25. Iliad, lib. ix. l. 146—156.

and that her guests are in the depths of hell; and the exhortations of the poet have been compared with the counsels of the preacher.

The passage, in which Priam complains that sharp grief for Hector would bring him to the grave*, is similar to that in which Jacob tells his sons, "that if mischief should " befall Joseph, they would bring down his " grey hairs with sorrow to the grave †." Thetis speaks of her son as a plant in a fruitful soil ‡; and the Psalmist compares children to " olive branches §," both employing figures of obvious analogy. There are many other passages in Homer containing moral reflections, images, and expressions, which have a general resemblance to Scripture, but which cannot be regarded as imitations by the Heathen poet, since in some instances the works of Homer claim a superior antiquity to that of the sacred books concerned, and in general they may be considered as vague and casual coincidences ||.

* Iliad, lib. xxii. l. 425.

† Gen. xlii. 38.

‡ Lib. xviii. l. 57. comp. with Isaiah liii. 2.

§ Psalm cxxviii. 3.

|| Iliad, lib. xxii. l. 501. with Job xxi. 24. and Jerem.

Enough, however, has been produced to render it not improbable that Homer had some knowledge of many particulars mentioned in Scripture.

It is not unreasonable, as we have before observed, to suppose that translations of a part, at least, of the inspired books into one of the languages of the East, might have been made before the time of Homer; but if it were not so, the principles of the patriarchal faith, and the manners and customs of the patriarchal times, established under the operation of permanent circumstances, were marked by such characteristic features, that they must have preserved a strong hold on the imaginations of men.

The works of Homer at least bear an indirect testimony to revelation. The absurdities, which were discovered under the theology of the heathens, however mixed with occasional truth, afforded subject of triumph to

xxxi. 14. *Iliad*, lib. xxi. l. 464—7. with *Isaiah* vi. 13; see also *Ezek.* xvii. 9. and *Ecclus.* xiv. 18. *Iliad*, lib. xxii. l. 63, 64. with *Isaiah* xiii. 16. and *Hosea* xiii. 16. and *Psalm* cxxxvii. 9. *Odyss.* lib. iii. v. 147. with *Numb.* xxiii. 19. *Iliad*, lib. vii. v. 81—83. with *Numb.* xxxi. 50; see also *Æneid*, lib. vii. v. 183. *Iliad*, lib. xvi. v. 191. with *Deut.* i. 31. *Iliad*, lib. i. v. 63. with *Numb.* xii. 6; see *Bogan. Homerus*, EBPAIZON.

the Christian writers, who exposed the vanity of the Pagan superstition before its lingering influence was dispersed. Every record of the belief of those, who lived in the days of ignorance, presents a tribute to revelation, as the night, by its shades, contrasts with, and certifies the day.

Homer is to be admired for the variety, discrimination and consistency of his characters. His style exhibits much resemblance to that of Scripture, by its simplicity and grandeur; it abounds in animated figures and descriptive imagery; his living words speak the inspiration of one, whose lips seem to be touched with hallowed fire; and he was not without some reason supposed to speak the language of the gods to man.

The Hymns do not contain any thing with which we are concerned.

CHAP. IV.

On Orpheus, and the Orphic Verses.

THE accounts of Orpheus are so various, and so much of fable is intermixed with the reports of his life, that many, with Aristotle, have been disposed to doubt, whether there was ever any real poet of that name, and, indeed, have imagined, that it is only a general title for a learned man, being derived, as they suppose, from the Arabic or Phœnician word *Arîfa*, or *Ariph*, which signifies the Erudite.

Not disputing his claims, however, to be regarded as a real personage and the son of *Ægeus*, we may consider him as having flourished in Thrace, and as having introduced some knowledge of the Oriental systems of theology into Greece; many writers represent him to have lived before the Trojan war, and

to have borne a part in the Argonautic expedition *; but Herodotus, whose judgment must have great weight, was, we have seen, of a different opinion †; and if we subscribe to this authority, we must suppose Clement of Alexandria to have been mistaken when he asserted that Homer had transcribed some things from the poems of Orpheus, and interwoven them with his own works ‡.

Orpheus is mentioned by Pausanias and Diodorus, as a man distinguished for his extraordinary talents, and for his civil and military services. Different cities appear to have contended for the honour of his birth. Apollodorus states, that he was buried at Pieria, in Macedonia, and the reputation which he had established by his poetry was so considerable, that his lyre was said to have been dedicated by the Lesbians to Apollo, and to have become a constellation.

It was probably from the character of the writings of Orpheus, that Thrace was regarded as a country from which religious information had been drawn. Pherecydes, a very

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i. c. 143. p. 397.

† Lib. ii. c. 53.

‡ Strom. lib. vi. c. 263. 266. p. 738. 751.

ancient Athenian, is reported by Suidas to have made a collection of his works *.

The poem of the Argonautæ, which describes the expedition, in which Orpheus is related to have borne his part with Hercules and other heroes; and the hymns which are ascribed to Orpheus †, are represented by Stobæus to have been composed by Onomacritus, or Pythagoras; and even the Orphic verses, which are cited by Justin and Clement of Alexandria, are considered by many writers as forgeries, as works of popular estimation cited by the Fathers for the purposes which they might answer, but without design to establish their credit ‡; other writers consider these works as the production of Cercops, the Pythagorean, though they contain possibly some of the opinions of Orpheus.

If we are to form our opinion of Orpheus from a collective view of what is quoted of him by ancient writers, and without attempting to discriminate what is genuine from what is spurious, we may look to him as having discovered and published some intimations of revealed truth, amidst the delu-

* Vid. Fabric. in Orph. et Eurip. in Rhés. lib. 943.

† Lactant. de falsâ Religione, lib. iv. c. 5. 13.

‡ Jortin's Remarks upon Eccles. Hist. vol. i. p. 300, 301.

sions of polytheism. Just sentiments are to be found in the fragments which are preserved, and indications of his knowledge appear in the fables recorded of him.

Thus, for instance, it is related, that he found out expiations for sin, and shewed how the divine wrath might be appeased ; discoveries which possibly might have some reference to the revealed doctrine of propitiation*. He was charged with disclosing mysteries ; and as his doctrines were probably much misconceived by the vulgar, it is not impossible that the tales of his having obtained the release of Eurydice from hell, and of his being torn in pieces by women, might bear allusion to the opinions which he divulged.

The instructions which he communicated, if they explained only the Egyptian hieroglyphics, could have contained but little to enlighten his countrymen, since these were the rude inventions of a people not much advanced in real knowledge ; and they probably gave rise to much superstition and idolatry †.

* Vide Fabricium. Pausan. lib. ix. p. 586.

† See Marsham's Canon, Chron. 38, and Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 223.

Some principles of the patriarchal faith had, however, spread and been preserved in the traditions of Egypt, and though there was darkness in the houses of the Egyptians, some divine knowledge had been occasionally imparted to the Israelites when abiding among them, glimmerings of which continued perhaps to shine long after the sun of revelation had set in their country with the departure of the chosen people of God.

Plato mentions the hymns of Orpheus*, and Suidas speaks of his discourses concerning the knowledge of God. In some lines preserved by Clement of Alexandria, Orpheus describes the Creator of the world as one perfect Being, by whom alone all things were made†, or from whom they sprung, and by whose presence all things are governed, whom no mortal has seen, and who sees all men. He is reported to have said at his death that there is but one God‡; and he affirmed, that all things arose from

* De Legib. Suidas Vöce Orpheus. John Malala Chronograph. p. 89, 90. Cedren. Hist. Compend. p. 46. Jackson. Chron. p. 16.

† Εἰς εἰς αὐτοτελῆς, εἰνος ἔκγονα πάντα τέτυκται, ἢ πεφυκεν. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. c. 250. p. 693. Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. xii. c. 12, 13.

‡ Theophil. ad Autolyc. lib. iii.

water*. He distributed, however, a multiplicity of subordinate divinities through the universe as appears from a cosmogony ascribed to him by Timotheus. There are other particulars consistent with the Mosaic account of the creation, and which seem borrowed from the Phœnician theology, representing the creation of all things from a dark chaos, which was illuminated by the Supreme Being, called Wisdom and the Giver of Life.

Clement, of Alexandria, and Eusebius have preserved some Orphic verses, which seem evidently to apply to Moses, who is styled the "Water-born†; and to Abraham, who is called the "Only-begotten;" in reference, probably, to what is said in Isaiah, "for I called him alone, and blessed him‡." These verses, however, are considered as spurious by Cudworth. In another place, Orpheus attests the divine voice, or word uttered by the Father, when he established the world§. We may attribute too much or too little to these passages; but let their authority or their importance be what

* See Athenæ. 38. & Pindar Ode 1st.

† ὕδατογενής. Cudworth, Book i. c. 4. p. 300.

‡ Isaiah li. 2.

§ Αὐτὸν εἶπε.

it may, it is not reasonable to undervalue the broken characters of remote antiquity, or to consider all that the Fathers have transmitted to us, as the result of credulity, and all the doubtful works which they have bequeathed to us, as necessarily spurious.

Still adhering to the rule of Cudworth, however, who insists only upon those passages which are attested by Heathen writers, we may refer to another extract from Orpheus, which is mentioned by Proclus upon Timæus, in which the universe, whatsoever hath been, is, or shall be, is said to have been all contained in the fecundity of Jove, one self-originated deity. Cudworth states, that Proclus understood this of “ the idea of all things “ being in God, before the world was produced *.” The learned writer also quotes other passages of similar authority, and to the same effect, tending to shew that in the Orphic theology, though there were many gods and goddesses, there was one original supreme deity above them all; and the opinion of Orpheus seems to have corresponded upon the subject of the divine nature with

* Cudworth's *Intellect. Syst.* b. i. c. 4.

that of Pythagoras and Plato, to whom, probably, it was derived from him.

Some of the works of Orpheus were attributed to Pythagoras. The *ἱερός λογός*, which is mentioned by Hierocles in his Commentary on the verses of Pythagoras, was a different work from that under the same title, supposed to have been written by Orpheus, which was a rhapsodical production.

There is a Greek poem still extant, which is mentioned by Stobæus as the work of Orpheus or Onomacritus*, and is by some thought to have been composed as far back as the Trojan war. It was published by Aldus in 1517, and by H. Stephens in 1566. Theodomantes, whom some imagine to have been the son of Priam, is introduced in this work as discoursing with Orpheus on the physical and theurgical virtues of stones. The learned Tyrwhitt†, however, by whom the poem was republished in 1781, denies that it can be considered as the work of Orpheus, or that Theodomantes the interlocutor in it, can be regarded as the son of

* Grot. Excerpt. a Stobæi. Florileg. p. 27. 23. 129. et Fabric. in Orph. Fragm.

† Vide Præfat. et Not. ad Poema Περὶ Λιθῶν.

Priam ; and he supposes it to have been a composition after the time of Constantine by some Asiatic writer, who wished to support the declining cause of paganism by those magical and superstitious opinions. Bochart supposes St. Paul to allude to a passage in one of the preliminary discourses of this work, in which is a fine eulogium upon wisdom*.

* Ephes. vi. 16.

CHAP. V.

Musæus.

MUSÆUS, who is faintly discerned in the mists of remote and doubtful antiquity, is sometimes represented as the disciple or son, as he is called, of Orpheus*, and sometimes as a contemporary of, or more ancient than, Linus. He is said to have been the son or grandson of Eumolpus the Second, and to have been born at Athens; as some contend, before the time of Homer, who, as well as Hesiod, is represented by Clement of Alexandria to have borrowed from him: and from respect to this supposed antiquity, or perhaps from regard to his religious character, being considered as a prophet, he was first addressed by the Sibyl who attended

* Lib. x. 7. p. 813. Pausanias speaks of him as a son of Antiophemus, lib. x. c. 13. p. 828. Edit. Lips.

Æneas to the Elysian Fields*. He is in general described to have been a prophet†.

The writings of Musæus, as well as those of Linus, except a few scattered lines, have perished. Aristophanes, in his play of the Frogs, speaks of a production by him, entitled Oracles‡, and the Scholiast upon the passage states that he is called by Sophocles a soothsayer, and that he composed a work on dissolutions§, (or remissions) expiations||, and purifications¶.

This work and an hymn to Ceres are mentioned by Pausanias**. Herodotus informs us that Onomacritus published oracular responses of Musæus††. Fabricius enumerates other works, of which Musæus is reported to have been the author, but which, whether genuine, or not, are lost.

* Strom. lib. vi. c. 263. p. 738. Iliad. lib. vi. v. 146. Pausan. lib. x. c. 9. p. 820. Herod. lib. viii. c. 96. Æneid. lib. vi. v. 667.

† Herod. lib. viii. c. 96. Strabo. lib. xvi.

‡ Χρησμοί.

§ Παράλυσις. Absolutions from crimes.

|| Τελίται. Religious mysteries, probably the Eleusinian,

¶ Καθαρμοί.

** See Pausan. lib. iv. c. 1. p. 281.

†† Lib. vii. c. 6.

It was a later Musæus who wrote the Lives of Hero and Leander, though Scaliger attributed the work to the former *.

Laertius informs us, that Musæus (others say Linus) thought that all things sprang from one, and were to be resolved again into one †.

The poetry of the ancients expressed the theology of their times, and Musæus in this passage, alluded probably to the Egyptian notion, that there is but one infinite nature, and that the various forms and diversities of mind, which are to be found in the universe, are only different representations of that nature, produced and renovated with self-originating powers, under an endless variety and by unceasing changes. The Divine nature was supposed to unfold itself by perceptible images to the senses of men, who erroneously circumscribe what is unbounded, by these definite figures, which express only partial descriptions of what is universal.

This notion, which spread itself with the diffusion of other Egyptian doctrines, appears in the philosophy of the Greeks, and

* Vit. Philos. lib. v. p. 494.

† Εξ ενός τα πάντα γενῆσθαι, και εις τὸν αὐτὸν ἀναλυέσθαι.

was fancifully embodied by the poets under the representation of Proteus*, who eluded the grasp of men by assuming a multiform change of appearance.

Gravina has well observed, that though this doctrine, which turns the Creator into the creature, be monstrous and absurd, yet it originated in a perversion of Hebrew doctrines which were true, and which affirmed that God was the author, and cause, but not the substance, from which all things were created. Those who were enlightened by Revelation, were instructed to believe that God created the earth from that which was “without form and void.” The heathens, however, not aware that every thing was created out of nothing, conceived that he drew the materials of the universe which he framed, from himself. Hence they fancied that the Divine nature was divided into different forms; and they worshipped, as they thought, the more excellent portions of it in the heavenly bodies, or in the persons of wise and distinguished men; thus converting “the glory of the incorruptible God into

* Vide Gravina de universa sapientia, p. 23.

“ an image made like to corruptible man,
 “ and to birds and four-footed beasts and
 “ creeping things,” changing “ the truth of
 “ God into a lie,” and worshipping and
 serving “ the creature more” “ than the
 “ Creator, who is blessed for ever *.”

Clement of Alexandria cites some lines of Musæus, in which the falling and renewal of leaves is compared to the succession of the generations of man, and which he supposes Homer to have copied †.

* Rom. i. 23—26, et Gravina de universa sapientia, p. 29.

† Ως δ' αὐτως. Strom. lib. vi. p. 738. et Iliad, lib. vi. l. 146.

CHAP. VI.

Pythagoras.

THERE have been many disputes concerning the period of Pythagoras; and Bishop Lloyd, Bentley, and Dodwell, have controverted the point with much learning. The best supported opinion seems to be, that he was born at Samos about 568 years before Christ, or earlier, his father having settled in that island, it was said, in pursuance of the direction of the oracle of Delphi, which predicted in the birth of Pythagoras many blessings to mankind. Having been educated at Samos he travelled for upwards of twenty years, conversing with Pherecydes, Thales, and other sages, and reading the hieroglyphical pillars of Hermes in Egypt, where he submitted to circumcision, in order to obtain an acquaintance

with the religious mysteries of that country *. He visited Crete and Sparta, having instructed himself in his different travels in the laws of Zoroastres†, Minos, and Lycurgus.

This great man, who was distinguished for his wisdom and for his exertions in favour of the liberties and moral interests of men, is said by Plutarch, never to have written any thing; others, however, represent him to have composed many works in physics and ethics, which have perished.

His followers ascribed many productions to him, particularly three works mentioned by Diogenes Laertius‡, which, though published under his name §, had little claim to be considered as genuine, and are now lost. In the time of Josephus no undisputed monument of his genius existed.

The golden verses which go under the name of Pythagoras may, perhaps, be considered as expressing his doctrines and opinions, and the received accounts of the te-

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i. c. 15. p. 354. Theodor. Theophrast. Laertius de Vit. Philos. lib. viii. Selden de Jure Nat. et Gent. lib. i. c. 2. p. 83.

† Selden de Diis Syris Syntag. 2. p. 322. vol. ii. Edit. Lond. 1706.

‡ Dodwell on the Age of Pythagoras.

§ Laertius, lib. viii. c. 15.

nets professed by his followers, who flourished as a sect till the end of the reign of Alexander. We may observe, that he seems to have maintained the unity of God as the mind and life of the world *, that the world had a beginning, and was made by God † the principle of all things ; and that the soul was immortal, and a part of the divine substance ‡.

Some have conceived from the first line in the golden verses that he was a Polytheist, exhorting men to worship the immortal gods, as was enjoined by law. In truth, however, it should seem, that the great men of antiquity inculcated a respect to the religion of their country, upon a principle of civil, as well as religious duty ; paying a reverence to the deities whose worship and service were established, and deeming this, compatible with the indulgence of their own speculative opinions, which they wrapped up in mystery, when likely to offend or mislead the general classes of society.

* Clem. Alex. Cohort. ad Gent. c. 21. p. 62. Justin Cohort. ad Græc. p. 84, 85. Cyril cont. Julian, lib. i. p. 30.

† Cudworth, p. 394.

‡ Universal History, vol. i. p. 26.

Judging from the collection of verses which we possess, we may suppose Pythagoras to have acknowledged one superior and universal God, since they contain a prayer in which Jove is apparently addressed as supreme, and entreated either to release mortals from evil, or to shew to what deity they all should direct their prayers.

Pherecydes, of Scyros, from whom Pythagoras sought instruction, appears to have believed the existence of three eternal beings, Jupiter, Time, and the Earth*.

Pythagoras is supposed to have introduced into Greece the doctrine of the three hypostases of the Trinity. He had also a notion more mystical and peculiar†, representing God as a monad and a dyad; and he sometimes treated of the Divine Nature under the term of a Tetrad or Tetractys‡. This is described in the golden verses as the fountain of perennial nature§, and by Hierocles, as the maker of all things, the intelligent God; from which some imagine, that it was

* Diog. Laert. and Pherecyd. p. 76.

† Plutarch de Placit, Philosoph. lib. i. c. 7. and Cud. b. i. c. 4.

‡ Burnet's Archeol. lib. i. p. 154.

§ Lines xlvii, xlviii.

designed to express the Tetragrammaton, or Hebrew name of Jehovah *.

In considering the Divine nature under two existing and eternal principles, a monad or unity, and a dyad or duality, he represents the former as an active power expressive of intelligence or mind; the latter is sometimes interpreted a dæmon or evil principle, actuating matter or the visible world, and sometimes considered as a passive principle or matter itself; notions followed up by Plato, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, and other writers.

Aristobulus, an Egyptian Jew, who lived in the time of Ptolemy Philometer, affirms, that Pythagoras transferred many things from the discipline of the Jews into his own institutions; an account confirmed by Hermippus, a Pagan author, who wrote his life. Josephus †, Porphyry, and others, represent him to have conversed with the Hebrews, and to have eagerly borrowed from their writings. The remark, therefore, of Lactantius ‡, who expresses his surprise that Pythagoras and Plato did not directly apply

* Cudworth, p. 376. Selden de Diis Syris.

† Cont. Apion, lib. i.

‡ De Vera Sapient. lib. iv. c. 2.

for information to the Jews, but rather had recourse to Egypt and Persia, was either incorrect, or must be received with great qualification, as importing only that they did not visit Judea. With respect to Pythagoras, even this cannot be admitted, since he is reported to have been in that country, and even to have stayed some time on Mount Carmel: and he is supposed to have been carried captive to Babylon by Cambyses*, or, as others assert, at an earlier period, by Nebuchadnezzar†; having possessed sufficient opportunities of obtaining directly‡ or indirectly an acquaintance with precepts of sacred instruction, conversing as some suppose with Zoroastres or his disciples, or as others contend, in agreement with their systems of chronology, with Daniel or Ezekiel; the latter of whom is conceived to have been Zabratius, who is mentioned as the preceptor of Pythagoras§. The Pythagoric

* Jamblicus in Vit. Pythag. c. 4. et Porphyry in Vit. Pythag.

† Diog. Laert. Porphyry. et Prid. p. 1. b. iv.

‡ Ambrose in Psalm cxviii. Tom. i. p. 983. Edit. Par. Origen cont. Celsus, lib. i. Clemens. Alexan. Strom. lib. i. c. 143. p. 397.

§ Selden de Jur. Nat. et Gent. lib. i. c. 2. p. 85—8. Gales' Court of the Gentiles, b. i. c. 2. Vossius de Sect. Philosoph. c. 6. § 6. Prid. Con. p. 1. b. iv.

numbers are supposed to correspond with, and have reference to the days of creation.

Many of the golden verses are evidently transcripts of the Mosaic precepts, particularly the prohibitions against graven images*, and theft, and the injunctions before mentioned in this work†. The sententious sayings of Pythagoras, were repeated by his followers, as the symbols of his party. The religious and moral principles which he introduced into Greece and Italy, improved the ethics, as his philosophical discoveries advanced the physical knowledge of those countries‡; his opinions formed the basis of the Italic philosophy; the golden verses have been much admired. John Aurispa, who first translated the commentary of Hierocles upon them into Latin, professes at the age of eighty, to have read nothing in Latin or Greek from which he had derived more profit. The instructions contained in them, particularly that, in which he directs us

* Εἰ δακτύλῳ εἰκόνα Θεῦ μὴ περιφέρειν. Diogen. Laert. lib. viii. Segm. 17. Exod. xx. 4. Ælian. lib. iv. Porphyry Hortat. ad Philan.

† Vide c. viii.

‡ Justin Martyr Dialog. Clem. Alex. Pædag. lib. ii. c. 1. p. 170. Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. ix. c. 6, 7.

never to resign ourselves to sleep till we have thrice reviewed the actions of the day, deserve the attention of the Christian.

The light of truth, which occasionally breaks forth amidst all the heathen systems, seems to be shed from some celestial source amidst surrounding shades, but it does not lead to a full and distinct apprehension of objects. Theophylact says, that Pythagoras did not acknowledge a Providence; but there are passages ascribed to him which speak of the intuitive and omnipotent power of the Deity. It is probable, that with the immortality of the soul, he believed its pre-existence*, and future transmigration into other bodies. The doctrines of transmigration were possibly designed to inculcate a regard to the brute creation, and to excite a feeling for them subservient to benevolence.

Lucian, in his sale of lives, introduces Pythagoras, as talking of beginning to purge the soul, and of washing it from its pollutions †.

* Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. xiii. c. 13. p. 674.

† Βίον ἡρώδης.

CHAP. VII.

Æsop.

ÆSOP died in the 50th Olympiad, about 560 or 570 years before Christ. He was by birth a Phrygian, and appears to have been sold as a slave at Athens, where he had some opportunities of cultivating his talents by the aid of the masters whom he served.

Having been enfranchised by Idmon or Iadmon, and established some reputation, he was engaged in the service of Cræsus king of Lydia; he lost his life in the execution of a commission with which he was entrusted by that monarch, being slain at Delphi, for having in consequence of a dispute with the Delphians, satirized their conduct and sent back some money to Cræsus which the king had employed him to distribute among them.

The Grecian philosophy which took its rise in lower Asia, about the time of Æsop, flourished greatly under the auspices of Thales,

Pittacus, Bias, Periander, Solon, and other sages.

Æsop conspired most usefully with the views of these great men: his mode of instruction by fables was particularly adapted to the improvement of rude and uncivilized ages, and was free from the loose and seductive allurements of the Heathen mythology.

Æsop has been generally represented as the inventor of this species of composition, but Quintilian * supposes it to have been first discovered by Hesiod. We have an account, however, of an apologue in Scripture, which has pretensions to a higher antiquity than Hesiod, if we place him in the remotest æra to which he has been assigned; the fable, which Jotham related to the men of Shechem †, having been composed probably before the time of Samuel, the reputed author of the Book of Judges, who was born, A. M. 2868. The Heathens highly approved the fables of Æsop, Socrates turned them into verse ‡, and Phædrus pro-

* De Instit. Orat. lib. i. c. 9. lib. v. c. 11.

† Judges ix. See also 2 Kings xiv. 9.

‡ Suidas in Σωκράτ. Plutarch πρὸς τὸν νεόν, p. 66. Edit. Wytttenbach. Plato Phæd. p. 60. Alcibiad. p. 123. Edit. Serran.

duced a work in imitation of them. Livius Andronicus, however, who lived about the time of the second Punic war, had before written fables at Rome. Diogenes relates that Æsop being asked by Chilo, one of the seven sages, what God was doing, answered, making the lofty low, and the low lofty *.

Neveletus first published a complete collection of Fables under the name of Æsop, from the Palatine library, alphabetically arranged, to the number of one hundred and thirty-six, with a latin translation: another collection, containing a hundred and forty-nine, was printed at Venice by Aldus Manutius, in 1505, but it has been questioned whether either of these collections contains the genuine fables of Æsop as originally composed by him, or whether, indeed, any of the subsequent editions, which have been published with encreasing number of fables, exhibit his authentic productions. Some have even disputed the existence of Æsop, and others, from a supposed similitude of names, have confounded him with Asaph, a prophet, con-

* Vid. Hesiod. Xenoph. Ελλην, lib. vi. Platon. Phæd. Fascicul. Test. Græ. ad Hist. et Philog. Pertin. Edit. Rotterd. 1693.

temporary with David *. Some Hebrew fables were published at Venice in 1545, and Plantavitius mentions a Hebrew Version of Æsop's Fables †.

Martin Luther translated some of the fables of Æsop into German, he was invited by Melancthon to complete the work, but was prevented by other engagements. The Romanists took occasion from thence to accuse Luther of not holding the Sacred Writings in higher estimation than the fables of Æsop.

* Jacob. Shadt. in Compen. Hist. Jud. p. 88. Carpzov. in Theol. Jud. Introd. c. 8.

† Bibl. Rabbin, p. 571.

CHAP. VIII.

On Æschylus.

ÆSCHYLUS, the son of Euphorion, was an Athenian; he is by some placed in the 65th and by others in the 70th Olympiad. Stanley, who draws his conclusion from the Arundelian marbles, assigns him to the 63d Olympiad. In general he is described to have flourished about 500 or 525, and to have died about 467 years before the birth of Christ. Few particulars of his life are known. He appears to have distinguished himself at the battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea. Like many of his countrymen he gave offence to the people, possibly by adopting the Egyptian, in preference to the Grecian theogony. He was accused also of divulging the Eleusinian mysteries, and of exhibiting prophane and terrific representations of the furies on the stage; but effecting his escape from the rage of the populace, he

appealed to the Areopagus and was acquitted*. He afterwards placed himself under the protection of Hiero, and died at Syracuse. The Syracusans raised a sepulchral monument to his memory near the river Gela.

Æschylus introduced great improvements on the rude representations of Thespis, with various inventions, which contributed to the decency and decoration of the stage. Of the many tragedies, which he composed, and the titles of which to the amount of above ninety are enumerated by Fabricius, seven only remain. These, as dramatic productions framed on relations popular in Grecian history, will not be expected to contain many allusions to foreign events.

He appears to have been a Pythagorean in his opinions†, he distinguishes between Jupiter and the other gods, but treats him with much irreverence; and Plato observes that his works ought not to be read by young persons, because he speaks of the gods with too little respect. All this, however, might

* Ælian. Ποικίλη ιστορία, lib. v. c. 19. Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. c. clxvi. p. 461. Plat. de Repub. lib. ii. p. 383.

† Cicer. Tuscul. Quest.

be consistent with the veneration of the Supreme Being, though he disregarded the objects of popular superstition.

In his mythology, there is a general reference to principles originating in revelation, and prevalent in every system of antiquity.

Thus the Deity is represented as pervading all things :

“ Jupiter is Æther, Jupiter is Earth, Jupiter is Heaven, Jupiter is every thing *.”

A thought similar to that of Lucan.

“ Jupiter is whatsoever you see, whatsoever you move †.”

The poet, in a passage cited by Eusebius ‡, describes the Supreme God as a being, who is carefully to be distinguished from mortals, as having nothing like the body of man. He declares, at one time, that God shines forth in unapproachable fire §, at another he invests him in the elements, as appearing in the wind, thunder, lightning and rain ; passages which remind us of the sacred descriptions of God, of “ the Angel of the

* Ζεύς ἐστίν αἰθήρ, Ζεύς δὲ γῆ, &c.

† Jupiter est quodcunque vides, Lucan, lib. ix. l. 580.

‡ Præp. Evan. lib. xiii. c. 13. p. 689. Edit. Par. 1628.

§ Deut. iv. 24. 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

“ Lord appearing in a flame of fire *,” and of “ the Lord descending in a cloud, standing before Moses, and proclaiming the name of the Lord †.” He states that the ocean ministers to the Supreme Being, as do also the rocks, and every fountain, and the collection of waters; that the hills and the earth tremble at his presence, the vast depth of the sea and the summits of the mountains; that the piercing eye of the Lord overlooketh every thing, for the glory of the highest God is powerful; expressions of piety, containing apparent imitations of passages in the Psalms, and the prophetic books, of which part at least was probably translated from the earliest times, and might be circulated through the East and thence transmitted to Greece. It is not undeserving of notice, that the calling up of the shade of Darius, by Atossa, when she received intelligence of the defeat of Xerxes, reminds us of the appearance of Samuel to Saul at Endor, though the fictitious relation has

* Exod. iii. 2; see also Exod. xix. 16. 18. Deut. iv. 24. and 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

† Exod. xxxiv. 5.

none of the interest or importance which attaches to the sacred account*.

The circumstances however most remarkable, and most easily brought into consideration, are those, which result from a view of the character and sufferings of Prometheus, as displayed in the play, which we possess; under the title of Prometheus bound.

These are so striking, that some fathers of the church seem to have regarded them as bearing a mysterious reference to the passion of our Lord, and to the benefit resulting from it, notions, not to be taken up but with great caution, and with that reverence which the solemnity of the subject requires.

Prometheus is represented by Æschylus to have been a god †, the son of Themis or Justice (by a father not named †); he is introduced as declaring that he accurately foresaw the future, and that no unexpected evil should come upon him, but that he was bound to bear an appointed destiny, and that he could not keep silent, nor yet not keep silent, his lot; that he in his state of misery was yoked to difficulties when im-

* Compare Περσαί, line 659—842, with 1 Sam. xxviii.

† Lines 14. 29.

‡ Line 18. Isaiah liii. 8. Heb. vii. 317.

parting blessings to mortals *; that he knew all these things, and that he offended willingly, and underwent labours to assist mankind †; he professes to have stolen fire from Heaven, bringing down to earth this emblem of Divine instruction.

“ The fiery flame that lends
Its aid to every art, I stole, and bore
The gift to mortals ‡.”

He states that he had made hope an inmate §. He speaks of having rendered them wise and intelligent who were before foolish, who seeing did not see, and hearing did not understand ||; as having provided a remedy for their diseases when there was no cure ¶, as having intervened when none other interposed between the wrath of Jove and man, as having delivered mortals, that they should not go down to the destruction of the grave.

* Line 101—108.

† Line 265. 267.

‡ Potter's *Æschylus*, Act i.

§ Line 250.

|| Οἱ πρῶτα μὲν, βλέποντες ἔβλεπον μάτην,
Κλύοντες ἐκ ἤκεον. L. 446, 447. with Isaiah vi. 9.

¶ Οὐκ ἦν ἀλέξημ' ἐδὲν, ἐδὲ βρώσιμον,
'Οὐ χριστον, ἐδὲ πιγδόν. L. 478, 479.

See also Isaiah lix. 16.

"None, save myself, opposed his will, I dar'd;
 And boldly pleading saved them from destruction;
 Sav'd them from sinking to the realms of night,
 For this offence I bend beneath these pains *.
 Dreadful to suffer, piteous to behold:
 For mercy to mankind I am not deem'd
 Worthy of mercy."

For this he is condemned to be chained to a rock, which was generally supposed to be on Mount Caucasus, but which Æschylus seems to place, as the Scholiast observes, in European Scythia, between the Ister and the Tanais †: there, within sight of the Euxine Sea, or of the Scythian ocean, he is affixed by force and strength with fetters forged by Vulcan; and the sufferings, which he endures with unshaken fortitude, with the sympathy of nature and the compassion of all nations ‡, have been thought to exhibit some traces of similitude to those which were foretold in Prophecy, and sustained,—not with indignant reproaches, but with patient submission to God, on the cross. Such com-

* Line 235. 241. ἐγὼ δὲ τολμῆς ἐξελευσάμην βροτοῖς. There seems to be an error in the word τολμῆς.

† Stanley supposes that he was chained near the Palus Mœotis, and that Caucasus was the scene of the second punishment.

‡ L. 396—432.

parisons, alluded to with all reverence, may serve to assist our enquiries in an investigation of the proofs of a remote connection between sacred and prophane writings; but they are too precarious, if not too presumptuous, in character, to authorize any peremptory conclusion.

Under such restraints it may be observed further, that the daughter of Inachus hails Prometheus as the deliverer of the whole world *, and Oceanus urges to him, in a strain of censure, that he had been always regardless of himself, and preferred the interests of mankind to his own.

A character then is marked out by the poet, as endued with divine attributes and incapable of extinction, who, having compassion on the race of men, whom he beheld living in the constant fear of death, determined to deliver them, and having succeeded in his design, is condemned on that account by Jove to undergo the most dreadful and continued agonies, amidst horrors of great sublimity, which he sustains with insurmountable constancy, admitting that Jove challenged Justice to himself, and foreseeing that

* Ω κοινὸν ἀφέλημα θεοῖσι. Line 614.

a time would come, when his wrath being appeased, he should eagerly return into the bond of friendship with him *, which eventually took place when, as Æschylus appears to have described in another drama now lost, Prometheus was delivered and admitted into Heaven.

A learned and ingenious friend of the author, who considers the character of Prometheus as that of a Divine mediator, remarks, that his bringing down fire to men, who had fallen under the wrath of Jupiter, seems to have a reference to the first institution of sacrifice by fire after the Fall, which there is reason to believe was revealed to man, that it might be typical of the great atonement. The account, which Hesiod gives of Prometheus having deceived Jove by giving him bones covered with fat, instead of flesh, in the division of an ox, might possibly bear reference to circumstances connected with sacrifice †.

Whatever conformity, however, may be found to exist between the dramatic character and the sacred original, there can be no ground of analogy to warrant the suppo-

* Line 186—192.

† L. 493, 530. *Æsopos*. L. 535—560.

sition that Prometheus was expressly designed to be a figure of Christ, though the representation of the Grecian poet affords a confession of the grandeur, and an illustration of the excellency of some of those qualities, which shone forth in our Lord. Nevertheless, the character of the Messiah, which was prophetically disclosed to the Jewish nation long before the time of Æschylus, might have afforded the outline of the sketch produced. If we examine the descriptions of the earlier prophets, and particularly those in the xxiid Psalm, and in the liiid chapter of Isaiah, we shall find that there is a general groundwork, upon which Æschylus might have formed the story of the sufferings of Prometheus in his character of a mediator; supposing those Sacred Writings to have been known to Æschylus through the medium of a translation, made previously to the Septuagint version. If this supposition be rejected, it must be difficult to frame any satisfactory theory, which can explain the cause of the coincidences. David and Isaiah have portrayed the Messiah as having “a generation which no man could declare,” as having “borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,”

as “ smitten of God and afflicted,” as “ being enclosed by the wicked, and as “ having his hands and his feet pierced,” “ as wounded for our transgressions and “ bruised for our iniquities,” and as “ bearing the chastisement of our peace.”

But further, the reproaches, expressed by Force and Strength, against Prometheus, as being unable to extricate himself from his sufferings, and therefore falsely called a God, have been thought to bear some resemblance to the mockeries with which the chief priests and multitude reviled Christ, saying, “ he “ saved others, himself he cannot save. These, if not accidental, may also be supposed to have resulted from some acquaintance with the Prophetic descriptions uttered in early times by the Psalmist and other inspired writers, with respect to those persecutors, who were to look upon our Saviour, when exposed to agony and derision * ; they may serve to raise additional ground of presumption of the existence of some early versions of the Scriptures or of such colloquial intercourse with the Jews, as might have afforded *Æschylus* a knowledge of those descrip-

* See Psalm xxii. 7, 8. 13, 14. 16, 17, &c.

tive circumstances, which he has introduced to heighten a character, in which fortitude, under sufferings sustained in the cause of humanity, is so finely delineated.

It has been remarked, that even the form of punishment, and the very posture, in which Prometheus endured it, have something extraordinary in them*, his hands being manacled and fixed to the rock, nature's rude cross, a bar being drawn across his breast, and his limbs not being broken†. Hence, Tertullian speaks of the cross of Caucasus‡, and Lucian mentions Prometheus as to be crucified§.

The Fathers, who were looking eagerly to Heathen testimonies in behalf of the truths which they maintained, attached too much to these correspondencies without attempting to furnish any distinct explanation of the causes, from which they originated. It does not however appear upon a collective view of the features of this singular portrait, that there are any particulars in the dramatic repre-

* Lipsius de Cruce, lib. v. Not. Varior. et Butleri Crit.

† Butler's *Æschylus*, l. lxx. See also Mart. I. *Spectac.* Epig. 7. Senec. *controv.* 10. 5. et Staul. *Comment.*

‡ *Adver. Marcion*, l. i.

§ *Προμηθεύς*. P. 173. Edit. Armstel.

sentation of Prometheus, which would authorize a belief that there was a concerted agreement between his character and that of Christ, or that his history connects directly and immediately with the Evangelical records. On the other hand, it would be extravagant indeed to suppose, that the Prophetic spirit directed the pencil of the poet.

The circumstances of conformity, resulting from an imitation of passages scattered through the Scriptures of the Old Testament, have only an indirect reference to those of the New. With respect to the proverbs and forms of speech, which are used by Prometheus, and which are nearly the same as those employed by the Evangelical writers, they can be regarded only as accidental coincidences of thought and expression. A conjecture may perhaps be hazarded, that the copyists of *Æschylus*, who were probably monastic writers, after having caught the general notion of a resemblance between the sufferings of Christ and those of Prometheus, might endeavour to work up the picture by applying to the latter, some circumstances, borrowed from the Evangelical accounts, the manuscripts of

Æschylus being probably in few hands; no authorities however can be produced for this conjecture, or for omitting the passages in question*.

Thuanus, having noticed the striking correspondencies which have been pointed out, composed a drama upon the subject †, in the exordium of which he remarks, that the ancient poets and sophists feigned many things under the pleasing veil of fable, which had been deduced from original traces of sacred truth; and he refers to the character of *Prometheus* for an instance. *Prometheus* is said to have been an Egyptian, the brother of *Atlas*, who flourished about the time of *Joshua*. *Bryant* supposes the character of *Prometheus* to have been framed from hieroglyphics misunderstood: and states that he was worshipped by the *Colchians* as a deity, remarks which do not throw any light upon the points, which have been considered.

Hesiod seems to have given the first account of *Prometheus* of any now extant ‡:

* See line 323, compare with *Acts ix. 5.* see also lines 472—4. compare with *Luke iv. 23.* and the word *χριστος*, *I. 479.*

† *Grotius Epist. 139.*

‡ *Θιολογία*, l. 521, &c.

but his representation is not adopted by Æschylus, who invests him, we have seen, with divine attributes, as does also Sophocles*.

Cicero ascribes the celebrity, which Prometheus, Atlas, and Cepheus obtained, to that Divine knowledge of heavenly things, which had transmitted their names to posterity, though involved in the fictions of fable †.

The description, which Æschylus furnishes of this extraordinary personage, is throughout dignified and sublime; and the scene and circumstances, in which he is placed, have a correspondent grandeur. His generous interposition in favour of mankind, his undaunted spirit, his resolute adherence to his purpose, and his unconquerable fortitude in sustaining sufferings are displayed with the most impressive and majestic effect amidst awful convulsions of nature. We behold him appealing to the elements, when oppressed by a severe decree; glorying in an immortal spirit; incapable of destruction, though the earth should be shaken to its foundation, and he himself be precipitated

* ΟΙΔΙΠ. 171, Κολων. et Catull. Nupt. Pelei et Thetid.

† Tuscul. Dissert. lib. v.

into Tartarus: and predicting the future fate of his oppressor. Thus unmoved amidst awful concussions which agitate the earth, he presents the image of a great example which may have suggested to Horace the representation, which he has drawn, of a just man firm and unmoved before a threatening tyrant, unshaken though the storm should rage and the thunder be hurled from the hand of Jove; fearless amidst the ruins of a falling world *.

* Vide Carmen 3. Ode 3.

CHAP. IX.

Pindar.

PINDAR was a native of Bœotia, and as some maintain of Thebes ; he was a contemporary of Æschylus, and was born in the 65th Olympiad, about 520 years before Christ. He is related to have been the son of Diaphantus a musician, and to have been born during the celebration of the Pythian Games, of a Grecian mother, named Myrtis, who was mistress to Corinna. He professes, however, to have been related to Arcesilaus, king of the Cyreneans, whatever was the rank of his parents.

Pindar raised himself above the obscurity of his birth, by his splendid talents, under the tuition, it is said, of Simonides, and he as well as Hesiod must be allowed to

have vindicated the climate of Bœotia from the charge of being unfavourable to genius*.

His Lyric Odes, composed in honour of the victors in the Grecian games, celebrated events which excited all the enthusiasm of his contemporaries, and procured for him almost divine honours, since by the oracle of Delphi, it was ordered that a portion of the first fruits belonging to the temple should be offered to him, and he recited his verses in the temple, sitting on an iron stool, which was long preserved; and such jealousy prevailed for the distinction which was conferred by his casual praise, that he was fined by the Thebans for celebrating their enemies the Athenians, as the supporters of Greece; upon which that generous people presented him with a sum to double the amount of the fine, and erected a brazen statue to him near the temple of Mars.

Being mortified by the magistrates of Thebes, who conferred some prizes on Corinna†, when she contended with him, he repaired to the court of Hiero, king of Sy-

* Erasm. Adag. Bœotia.

† Pausan. in Bœotia et in Phoc.

racuse, and employed himself in commemorating his success in the Grecian games*.

The memory of the poet was cherished with great reverence, and became the subject of many fabulous relations, and the ruins of his house, which stood on the banks of the river Dirce, which had been respected by the Lacedemonians and by Alexander, when they captured Thebes, remained till the time of Pausanias.

Pindar is related to have composed tragedies, which have perished; four books of his odes remain written in the Doric dialect, with some mixture of the Ionic. Lord Bacon says, that Pindar strikes the mind as with a Divine sceptre; his reflections are carried on in a high strain of moral eloquence, and he celebrates with much effect the excellency of piety towards the gods, and of justice, fortitude, and hospitality towards men; he appears to have embraced the Pythagorean philosophy; he attributes to the deities the same origin as to men, both being derived from a common mother*: considering both therefore as created

* *Ælian Ποικιλ. ιστορ.* lib. xiii. c. 25.

* *Νεμεα.* Ode 6. 1—3. *Clemens. Alex. Strom.* lib. v. c. 255. p. 709.

beings, formed by the supreme God, whom he styles elsewhere “ the universal Deity *,” “ the most powerful †,” “ the Lord of all,” and “ cause of all things, whose counsels it is difficult to search out ‡,” and whom he represents Chiron to have instructed Achilles to worship §.

He speaks of the immaterial nature of the soul, and alludes to the happy condition of men in a future state of reward. Plato appears to have drawn many things from him in confirmation of his proofs of the immortality of the soul; and there are passages in the Odes which correspond with parts of the inspired book. Clement of Alexandria affirms, that Pindar borrowed many things from the Sacred Writings, and particularly from the Proverbs of Solomon||.

The opening of the 4th Olympic Ode, in which Jove is addressed as borne on the unwearied wings (or feet) of the thunder, reminds us of the passage in the civth Psalm,

* Fragm. et Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. c. 259. p. 726.

† Ibid. et Not. comp. with Isaiah xl. 13.

‡ Cudworth, b. 1. c. 4.

§ Πύθια, Ode 6. et Cudworth.

|| Clement. Alex. Pædagog.

in which God is described “as walking upon
“ the wings of the wind.”

In speaking of water as a distinguished element, he alludes probably to the creation of the world from a watry chaos, agreeably to a tradition which seems afterwards to have been referred to by St. Peter*. Under the spirit, and just impressions which he cherishes, he ascribes the success of Hiero in the Pythian games to the Divine aid, and asserts that all the qualities of human virtue, wisdom, strength and eloquence are derived from God; and in his Isthmian Odes he affirms the same of fortitude. There are other passages expressive of convictions which might seem to have been derived from the sources of Revelation†, teaching man to revere the laws of piety, of justice, and of truth. The defects of heathen morality sometimes appear, as when Pindar asserts, that hostile force is to be destroyed by any means; this is qualified by Plutarch in a subsequent sentence, expressing that the end of injustice is bitter,

* 2 Pet. iii. 5. ΟΑΥΜΠ. Ode i. l. 1.

† ΠΥΘΙΑ. Ode ii. l. 90. and ΟΑΥΜΠ, Ode vi. l. 132, &c

however gratifying the act may be*. In general, the precepts of the poet are just and noble, and his sentiments pure, though delivered with some obscurity. His moral thoughts are gleams of light bursting through clouds, his genius is wrapt in shades, and he seems to soar away into the highest regions of fancy. He mingles the fictions of allegory with the records of history, and the sudden transitions of subject in which he indulges, are connected only by subtle and often imperceptible links.

The images which Pindar presents to the mind are splendid and beautiful, he seems to mount the battlements of some ancient structure, and to wave his royal banners, painted and emblazoned with the heraldry of former times. Even now we are hurried away by enthusiasm in reading his odes; and when they were recited, with the interest which attached to them at their first production, they must have required the aid of the music, to which they were composed, to calm and regulate the minds of the hearers†.

* Plutarch de audiendis Poetis, § 20.

† West's Pindar, Preface.

The victories celebrated by the poet were considered as among the most desirable distinctions which could be obtained. All the nations of Greece assembled at the public games *, and likewise strangers from Egypt, Asia, and Africa, to witness not only the contests of bodily skill, but the display of intellectual pre-eminence in the productions of eloquence and poetry, in works of history, and in epic and lyric compositions.

† Pausan. Eliac. Prior, lib. 5. c. 8. p. 391.

CHAP. X.

Sophocles.

SOPHOCLES and Euripides appear to have maintained some of the patriarchal principles of religion. A slight attention to the works of these writers will be sufficient to prove this.

Sophocles was an Athenian, born at Colone, in the 71st Olympiad, under the archonship of Philip, 25 or 30 years, according to the chronology which we adopt, after Æschylus, and fifteen or twenty before Euripides, near five hundred years before Christ. Descended from parents in a moderate station, he engaged early in military life, and is said to have been present with Æschylus at Salamis, and to have been joined in commission with Pericles to reduce the Samians, on occasion of a revolt. Thus among the

heroes of antiquity many were able to celebrate in poetry the victories which they contributed to obtain. Sophocles, in particular, employed his harp to accompany the pæans of triumph at Salamis. He is reported to have derived instruction from Æschylus, but to have surpassed his master in a poetical contest upon occasion of the discovery of the bones of Theseus at Athens. The high reputation which he obtained excited such enthusiasm in his favour, that many ascribed to him the power of performing miracles, even Cicero mentions that it was reported of him that he discovered in a dream the man who had stolen a goblet from the temple of Hercules.

Sophocles is said to have written 120 plays, of which seven only remain; he appears to have delighted in describing noble characters, and in expressing generous affections. He speaks of the supreme God in a manner superior to the vulgar notions of his time, and which seems to raise the great object of adoration with distinction above the Heathen deities.

To this effect is the following passage in the *Antigone* :

“ Who of men, Jove

“ Can by surpassing pride controul thy power,

“ Which neither all enfeebling sleep

“ Can ever arrest, or the unwearied

“ Months of the Gods: but unworn by time,

“ Supreme Lord! thou dwellest

“ In the bright splendour of Olympus;

“ That which is at hand, and that which is remote,

“ And that which has past away fulfil thy will*.”

The lines remind us of the beautiful passage in the Psalms:

“ He that keepeth thee will not slumber,

“ Behold he that keepeth Israel

“ Shall neither slumber nor sleep †.”

And Habakkuk says:

“ His brightness was as the light ‡.”

Cudworth also produces from Clement of Alexandria a passage of Sophocles as genuine, though not now extant, which is in substance as follows;

“ In truth there is one God,

“ Who framed the Heaven and th’ extended Earth,

“ The azure billows and the force of the winds §.”

* Antig. l. 612. 622. Edit. Johnson.

† Psalm. cxxi. 3, 4.

‡ Chap. iii. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

§ Intell. Syst. b. 1. ch. 4. Εἰς ταῖς ἀληθειαισιν. Clem. Alex. Cohort. ad. c. 7. p. 63. Edit. Potter. Strom. lib. v. c. 257. p. 717.

Clement of Alexandria cites also a passage concerning God as imparting mysterious prophecies to the wise, and evil to the wicked, and as a teacher of compressive instruction *.

Besides these general coincidences, there are some modes of expression and sentiment in Sophocles, which harmonize with the instructions of Scripture †. The poet in particular reflects upon the vain custom of worshipping deities of stone and wood, and he inculcates piety as acceptable to God, and as unperishable ‡.

It is singular, that in describing an expiatory service to be performed to the Gods, he speaks of a libation of water from a cup, to be bound with wool fresh from a lamb newly shorn §.

The Scholiast on the Ajax Mastigophorus says, that it was an ancient custom when the slaying of a man (or mactatio) was projected, to wash the hands ; an observa-

* Strom. lib. v. c. 238. p. 659.

† Comp. *Αἰτίων*. l. 26—30. with Jerem. xxii. 18, 19. *Αἰτίων*. l. 641—44. with Psalm cxxvii. 5. *Αἰτίων*. l. 129—134, with Psalm xxxi. 23.

‡ ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ, l. 1487—90. Edit. Johnson, 641—44.

§ ΟΙΔΙΠ. *Επὶ Κολων.* l. 482—8. See also Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 4. c. 204. p. 565.

tion which is confirmed by other writers*, and which illustrates the conduct of Pilate before he condemned our Saviour.

Plutarch, who has justly exposed the erroneous and pernicious tendency of some scattered passages in the poets, particularly remarks on some blemishes in Sophocles, as where he represents “gain as sweet,” though purchased “by falsehood†;” but this is counterbalanced by others in a different spirit; it would be unfair to judge of his morality by detached sentences, and without a strict examination of the character and circumstances under which they are expressed.

* Virgil *Æneis*, lib. ii. l. 717—19.

† Plutarch. *de audiend. Poet.*

CHAP. XI.

Euripides.

THE parents of Euripides are said to have taken up their abode at Salamis, after flying from Greece to escape the invasion of Xerxes, and the poet is related to have been born in that island, on the very day that the Athenians obtained a naval victory over the Persians, at the mouth of the Euripus, about 480 years before Christ.

Euripides, as well as Pericles and Socrates, is related to have been a disciple of Anaxagoras*, who taught the principles of Thales at Athens, and maintained that the universe

* The opinions of Anaxagoras were in other respects elevated and spiritual, and he appears to have looked forward with great confidence to a future state; being enquired of whether he had any regard for his country, "I care," says he, "for my country, and greatly care for it," pointing at the same time to the heavens, and intimating that he looked to them as to his country and destination.

did not result from chance or necessity, but was the work of an eternal and incorporeal Mind or Intelligence, which created all things, and preserves all things by its wisdom and power.

Euripides passed much of his time at Athens, but he lived occasionally in Macedonia, under the patronage of Archelaus, the king of that country. His reputation spread extensively during his life, and those Athenians who were taken prisoners in Sicily, after the defeat of Nicias, who could repeat the verses of Euripides, were saved from the fate which overwhelmed their countrymen.

He was honoured by Archelaus with a sepulture among the Macedonian kings, and when the Athenians, who had deplored his loss by a general mourning, wished to remove his bones to Athens, the Macedonians with one voice refused to grant their request; his works however appear to have attracted less observation among the Romans than those of Æschylus and Sophocles; though Cicero indeed ascribes nearly an equal praise to each of these great writers, supposing each to have excelled in his peculiar line. Quintillian considers Euripides as

best adapted to the use of orators, and Cicero is related to have been reading the *Medea* when he was murdered.

Barnes says that Euripides aimed at the instruction of his hearers, and at the promotion of piety, constancy, and prudence, and that he confirmed the doctrines of the providence of God, and of the immortality of the soul *, maintaining that it did not vanish like smoke, but became subject to future punishment †.

He excelled in exciting the passions; he is represented by Aristophanes who cannot be considered as lenient towards the sex, to have been particularly severe in his treatment of females. Sophocles observed, that he himself painted women as they should be, but Euripides as they were ‡.

The tragedies of Euripides are said to have exceeded ninety, of which only nineteen now remain. He is reported to have consulted Socrates on the choice of his subjects, and to have been greatly esteemed by that philosopher for the dignity and gravity of his sentiments, and for that love of virtue and

* ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΑ, l. 529, &c.

† ΕΑΕΝ, l. 1020. et Barnes in loc. et vit. p. 13.

‡ ΤΡΩΑΔ. l. 660, &c. Aristoph. Thesmoph. l. 554.

noble contempt of death which he inspired. Socrates himself did not disdain to be present at the representation of his tragedies.

The Athenians who sometimes tolerated great licence and the most offensive indecencies on the stage, particularly in the comic and satirical writings of Aristophanes, appear to have been greatly offended at any deviation from rectitude of principle in the higher and dignified productions of the drama.

There is a sentiment which is expressed in the *Hippolytus* to this effect: "My tongue has sworn but still my mind is free," for which the author was accused of impiety, and not without just cause, since it seemed to open a latitude for mental evasions subversive of all truth and confidence. Plutarch also has remarked upon a passage in which the poet seems to represent the gods availing themselves of their superior knowledge to deceive men, but he points out in what is subjoined, that if the gods do what is base they are not gods*. The rigour which the Athenians then exercised in this respect, reflects a credit on their judgment. They

* Plutarch de Audiend. Poet. § 20.

however pushed the spirit to an extreme, since they arraigned Euripides also for some maxims of avarice expressed by a miser whom he introduced, speaking in the consistency of his character. They compelled him also to alter two verses in his *Menalippe*, which seemed to convey a doubt of the existence of Jupiter. From this and other circumstances he became suspected of impiety, though remarkable for the strength of his religious impressions, as appears from passages which will be produced. The poet, when it was objected to him that he had made Ixion an impious and wicked character remarked, that nevertheless he had not dismissed him from the scene, but when affixed to the wheel*.

The intolerance exercised by the Athenian public was at length carried to such an excess, that their interference extended even to points of philosophy, since Anaxagoras was condemned to death for affirming that the sun was a ball of fire, and with difficulty obtained a change of the sentence, by the interest of Pericles, to banishment and a fine.

Many of the characters employed by Euripides, are supposed to have been casts from

* Plutarch. *πρωτὸς δὲ τοῦ νεοῦ*. p. 73, Edit. Wytttenbach.

sacred originals ; or at least some traits and features of their form, may have been borrowed from the representations of Scripture : thus Hercules and Omphale, remind us of Samson and Delilah ; Iphigenia, of Jephthah's daughter, and Hippolytus of Joseph. There are expressions also and modes of speech in Euripides, which have been thought to resemble those of Scripture*. Clement of Alexandria refers to a passage, which speaks of the invisible God, who beholds all things†.

Cudworth cites some lines from the Suppliant Women of Euripides, expressive of the dependence of man on Jove, which indicates a just sense of the relation subsisting between the Creator and the creature :

“ O Jupiter ! wherefore do they say
 “ That grief sustaining mortals are wise,
 “ For we are dependent on thy will,
 “ And do those things which thou mayest decree ‡.”

* Comp. *Ἰππολυτ.* l. 5, with 1 Sam. ii. 30. Line 86 with Exodus xxxiii. 20. L. 426 with Habakkuk ii. 13. L. 969 with Exodus xxi. 13, in the Hebrew, and Phædrus, Fab. 63, L. 895. with Psalm cxli. 3. L. 1067 with 2 Sam. i. 16. L. 1465 with Job xvii. 16.

† Cohort. ad Gent. c. 20. p. 59. Edit. Potter.

‡ Ω Ζεῦ τι δῆτα. Cudworth, b. i. c. 4. p. 363.

He refers also to this prayer ;

- “ To thee, provident ruler of all, I bring
- “ The libation and the salted cake, O Jove!
- “ Or whether thou delightest in the name of Hades,
- “ For thou amidst the heavenly Gods,
- “ Wielding the sceptre of Jove,
- “ Hold'st the command of earthly things :
- “ Send light to the souls of men,
- “ Desirous to know whence sorrows have burst forth,
- “ And what is the root of evil,
- “ And to which of the Gods rightly sacrificing,
- “ We may find a rest from our labours *.”

Cudworth cites also another passage which may be thus translated :

- “ And thou self-existing being, that embracest
- “ Nature in one ætherial circle, clothed with the light,
- “ Clothed too with the varying mantle of dark night ;
- “ About whom the countless multitudes of stars
- “ incessant dance †.”

Some have conceived this passage to refer to the succession of day and night, and the revolution of the heavenly bodies : but as Cudworth observes, it seems to imply that God being in himself a most bright and dazzling light, is with respect to us, and by reason of the weakness of our understanding,

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. c. 248. p. 688.

† See also, Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. 257, p. 717.

covered with a thick veil, "clouds and darkness being round about him."

In the Menalippe, he appears to have spoken of the creation of the heavens and the celestial and terrestrial bodies from a confused mass, in an order which reminds us of the Mosaic account; stating that there was one face of the heavens and of the sun, which received the commands of the Deity, and brought forth birds and beasts, flocks and men*.

In some lines cited by Clement of Alexandria he enquires, what house framed by architects can enclose the Divine Person within the folds of walls †?

Euripides in the Suppliants represents Theseus as thus directing:

" Permit then that the dead

" Be in the earth entombed. Each various part

" That constitutes the frame of man returns

" Whence it was taken;—to the æthereal sky

" The Soul; the Body to its earth: of all,

" Nought save this breathing space of life, our own;

" The Earth then which sustained it when alive,

" Ought to receive it dead ‡."

* 'Εάσατ' ἡδὲ γῆ, &c. l. 531. Euseb. præp. l. i. c. vii.

† Clem. Alex. Strom. l. v. c. 249. p. 691, compared with Isaiah lxvi. 1.

‡ Athen. l. 12, &c. and Potter's Translat. of Euripides. l. 550.

In his *Bacchæ* he affirms that valour is a divine gift, and in his *Suppliants*, that it brings nothing to mortals, unless it have the aid of the Gods; sentiments which bear a general resemblance to the pious declarations of the sacred writers *.

* Psalm ii. and 1 Maccab. See other passages in Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iv. c. 212. p. 588.

CHAP. XII.

Herodotus.

HERODOTUS, who was born in the first year of the 74th Olympiad, 484 years before Christ, may be regarded as the father of Pagan history, he affords the earliest, and in general, the most authentic accounts of the Assyrian, Egyptian, and Grecian, nations. He was a native of Halicarnassus, from which city, when under the oppression of Lygdamus, he retired to Samos; and afterwards accompanied a colony of Athenians to Thurium, where he is stated by Pliny to have written his history: he is said to have recited it to the nations of Greece, when assembled at the Olympic games, and to have died at Thurium.

Herodotus is reported also to have travelled into Syria and Egypt*, and he appears to have collected information with

* Plin. lib. xii. c. 4. Lucian in Herod. t. i. p. 571.

great industry. If he received some erroneous accounts upon the credit of the Egyptian priests, he gives them with frequent intimation of doubt. He does not mention or borrow from the Hebrew writings, though in many places he confirms the history contained in them. In some instances relating to the Assyrians, the Medes, and the Persians, and particularly to Cyrus, his statements are not so consistent with Sacred History as those of Xenophon, who seems silently to have corrected the errors of his predecessor. He represents, however, the Persian conqueror as acting under the impression that he was something more than man, born with a divine fortune, enlightened by visions and by some deity to foresee events, being destined to be an instrument in the hands of Providence*.

The opportunities which Herodotus enjoyed in his travels, and the industry which he exerted, might naturally lead us to look for information from him as to particulars connected with the history of the Jews, and the progress of Revelation.

* Lib. i. c. 126. 204. 209, 210. Edit. Wesseling, p. 63, &c.

Herodotus has been thought to speak of Jerusalem under the name of Cadytis, he describes it as little inferior to Sardis *. There are some circumstances in his account which might lead us to suppose that he spoke of a maritime city. In mentioning, however, the victory which Necho obtained over the Syrians at Magdolum, and which probably was the battle in which Josiah was killed, he states Cadytis to have fallen into the possession of the victor †.

Herodotus does not appear to have directed his attention particularly to the Jewish people, and his statements have been sometimes supposed to differ from those of Scripture.

In enumerating the various nations who contributed their forces to the expedition of Xerxes, he mentions that the Phœnicians, in conjunction with the Syrians of Palestine, provided three hundred triremes; and he states that this latter people, by their own

* קדחתא a Syriac word from קדשה holy, which Hales (vol. i. p. 426.) says, is inscribed on Jewish shekels, thus. קדשה ירושלם, Jerusalem the holy. Herod. lib. iii. c. 5. p. 161. Edit. Gron. Isaiah xl. 2. Dan. ix. 24. Neh. xi. 1. and Matt. iv. 5.

† Lib. ii. c. 159. with 2 Kings xxiii. 29—34.

report, once inhabited the coasts of the Red Sea, and thence migrated to the maritime parts of Syria, all which country, and even to Egypt, was, according to the historian, called Palestine*. Cumberland understands this account to relate to the elder Phœnicians or Canaanites, others are of opinion that the passage referred to, incidentally confirms the relation of the sojourning of the Israelites in the wilderness. The assertion of the Historian that the inhabitants of Palestine professed to have borrowed circumcision † from the Egyptians, is, as Grotius has observed, in direct opposition to what they affirm ‡.

The Egyptian calculations which he mentions, are not only inconsistent with the sacred chronology, but so utterly extrava-

* Lib. vii. c. 89. lib. Sanchoniath. p. 375.

† The following passage from the preface of Larcher, deserves attention: “Enfin intimement convaincu de toutes les vérités qu’enseigne la Religion Chretienne, j’ai retranché, ou réformé toutes les notes qui pouvoient la blesser. On avoit tiré des unes des conséquences que j’improve, et qui sont loin de ma pensée. D’autres renfermoient des choses, je dois l’avouer avec franchise, et pour l’acquit de ma conscience, qu’un plus mur examen, et des recherches plus approfondées, mont démontré reposer sur de trop légères fondemens, ou être absolument fausses.” *Histoire D’Herodote. Paris, 1802.*

‡ Lib. ii. c. 104.

gant and unsupported as to be evidently swelled by the vanity of the people, and founded on erroneous computation.

Some representations which he makes, though they have been occasionally disputed, and have exposed him to the imputation of credulity, have been confirmed by the accurate observation of modern travellers, and they bear testimony to the facts recorded in the Scriptures, or illustrate their connection and consistency with the circumstances and customs which he states to have prevailed. Thus, for instance, he alludes to customs in the manners of the Persians at their entertainments which explain the strong reasons of Vashti's refusal to come at the command of Ahasuerus, to appear at the feast to which she was invited *.

It may be observed also that though we are not concerned with the Apocryphal books, that the representation which Herodotus gives of the flagitious corruption of the Persian women, remarkably confirms the description given of them recorded by Baruch †, who professes to have written the

* Comp. Herod. lib. v. c. 18. p. 292. with Esther ii. 10, 12.

† Comp. Herod. lib. i. c. 199. with Baruch xliii.

book which goes under his name at Babylon; and it must be added, however, that the chapters in which the passage alluded to occurs is supposed not to have originally constituted a part of the book of Baruch.

Herodotus mentions that the Persians were accustomed to refer their dreams to soothsayers *, and this statement corresponds with the relations in the book of Daniel.

The Historian informs us that Dimocedes, a physician of Crotona, who resided some time at Susa, and who effected the cure of Darius when suffering from an accident, availed himself of the influence which he thereby obtained to procure the pardon of the Egyptian physicians at the Persian court, who had been condemned to death from having been unable to restore the king †. The tyrannical decree which this narration intimates to have been passed, shews the probability of an account in the book of Daniel, in which it is related that the wise men were condemned to be slain by Nebuchadnezzar because they could not recal to the king's mind the dream which had escaped his memory ‡.

* Lib. i. c. 107, 108. lib. vii. c. 19.

† Lib. iii. c. 132.

‡ Dan. ii. 12.

He gives a remarkable account of Sennacherib (whom he calls the king of Arabia and Syria) having attacked Egypt with a great army, upon which the soldiers of Sethos, king of Egypt, refused to assist him. In this distress he went, says the historian, to the temple, where sinking into sleep, the deity promised that if he would march, he should not suffer any harm but receive assistance. In this confidence he proceeded to Pelusium with an army of tradesmen and artizans. On his arrival an unusual number of rats infested the enemies' camp, and gnawed the thongs of the quivers, bows, and shields; in consequence of which the next day their troops fled; the historian adds, that in his time there was to be seen a marble statue of this king in the temple of Vulcan, having a mouse in his hand, with this inscription, "whoever thou art that lookest upon me, learn to reverence the gods*." The historian describes the death of Apries in a manner very strikingly conformable to the prophecy of Jeremiah; the Prophet had declared that he should be given into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that

* Lib. ii. c. 141.; see 2 Kings xix. 35. Isaiah xxxvii. 13.

sought his life; and Herodotus relates that Apries was said to be persuaded that not any god could deprive him of his kingdom, and that when he was defeated by Amasis and carried captive to Sais he was for some time generously treated, but upon the complaint of the Egyptians against Amasis for supporting a man most inimical to them he delivered Apries to them; and they put him to death *.

Herodotus mentions circumstances with respect to the taking of Babylon, which illustrate the exact and wonderful prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, who foreshewed that it should be besieged by the Medes and Persians, that the river should be dried up, and the princes and rulers made drunk, and sleep a perpetual sleep; he particularly relates, that the course of the Euphrates was changed, so that the river was rendered fordable, and that the city was taken on a festival when the inhabitants were absorbed in intemperance †.

Herodotus traces the derivation of the European nations in agreement with the re-

* Comp. lib. ii. c. 169. with Jerem. xlv. 30.

† Comp. lib. i. c. 189—191. with Isaiah xxi. 2. xlv. 27. Jerem. i. 24. 38. li. 36. 57. Dan. v. 30.; see also Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. iv—vii.

port of Scripture from Asia; he particularly represents the Phœnicians to have come into Greece with Cadmus, and to have brought the knowledge of letters and their theology with them*. He observes that the names of almost all their gods were derived from Egypt †.

There are some minute particulars which may deserve a cursory notice as tending further to shew the agreement between sacred and prophane history. Herodotus mentions the discovery of a stone coffin in Judea, seven cubits in length, which exhibited a memorial of the existence of giants in that country. The story which he relates of Arion, who in a voyage from Tarentum to Corinth was thrown into the sea, and was carried by a dolphin to Tænarus, and from thence to Corinth, (the particulars of which are repeated by Plutarch,) is supposed to have been founded on the miraculous account in the book of Jonah ‡.

Herodotus relates that the Lacedæmonians were prevented from being present at the battle of Marathon from their declining

* Lib. v. c. 58.

† Lib. ii. c. 49.

‡ Lib. i. c. 23. Comp. also Lib. vii. c. 46. with Psalm xc. and x.

to march till there was a full moon, a circumstance which tends to shew their respect for a superstition which influenced the Jews also, with whom they are supposed to have had an early connection, but which had something to alledge in its favour from the light afforded by the planet. The account, though denied by Plutarch, is confirmed by Pausanias * and Lucian †.

We see in the contrast which he furnishes between the Persians and Greeks, the moral causes of the decline of the Persian empire, and of the success of the Greeks; the strain of reflection, as well as the amusing relations of the historian, seem at all times to have recommended his history to general attention; while it has been recommended also by a style peculiarly soft and pleasing, and which seems to have been regulated by some concealed rhythm.

* B. i. c. 28.

† Περὶ Αστρολ. c. 25.



CHAP. XIII.

Thucydides.

THE accounts of Thucydides are defective, and of precarious authority. He appears to have been a native of Athens, the son of Olorus, and descended in the maternal line from the family of Miltiades and with that of Cimon, which had enjoyed dominion and formed royal connections in Thrace*, where he inherited large possessions. He is reputed to have been born 471 years before Christ, and 13 years after Herodotus, though others place him somewhat later in the 77th Olympiad, 468 B. C. He is said to have been a disciple of Anaxagoras, and seems to have shared the discredit which attached to his master, being suspected of atheistical opinions, but probably without having deserved the imputation.

* Plutarch's Life of Cimon.

He intimates his disbelief indeed, in the popular predictions of his time, and he possibly despised the superstition of his countrymen, which prevailed to an extent of which he furnishes a strong illustration, when he relates that Nicias delayed the embarkation of his troops after his failure in Sicily, at a most critical and dangerous period, on account of an eclipse of the moon, and thereby occasioned the destruction of his army and fleet. He speaks of Nicias as least deserving to die, because his whole life was devoted to the worship of the Deity *.

Thucydides was considered as a man of great probity and modesty, and the candour, impartiality, and regard to truth which he displays in his history even towards those who were hostile to him, reflects the highest credit on his memory, and greatly recommends his history. He appears to have been inspired with an early desire of rivalling Herodotus, and his work is greatly to be admired for the grandeur of its composition. It is valuable, as furnishing at the commencement, a faithful sketch of the earlier periods of Greece, exhibiting the uncertainty

* Lib. vii.

and little importance of preceding history ; as well as the recency of a people not united in any confederate undertaking till that of the siege of Troy, and living at first in a state similar to that of the Israelites as described in the book of Judges, in which rapine, insecurity, and revolutions prevailed. The history is also interesting, as exhibiting in a striking connection of events the rise and progress of a war, which from an inconsiderable commencement originating in a dispute between Corcyra and Corinth, about Epidamnus, drew in all the powerful states of Greece, and terminated in the ruin of the Athenian state.

The work illustrates well the spirit of a republic, restless, turbulent, precipitate, and often unjust in its proceedings ; regulating its views of policy by the feelings and passions of the people, and manifesting caprice, intemperance, and ingratitude to the great men whom it employed in its service. Hobbes * professed to have translated it principally with a view to expose the follies of a democracy.

The exact and chronological detail of

* Vide Hobbes translat. and Bayle.

Thucydides, gives a particular value to his history. It was composed at Scaptesyle, the historian having been banished there for twenty years, for a failure in the succour of Amphipolis. He is supposed to have returned afterwards to Athens, and to have fallen a victim to some charge of irreligion, bequeathing his history, as an eternal monument to posterity*.

The work contains a period of twenty-one years of the Peloponnesian war, the account of the last six years being supplied by Cratippus, Theopompus, and Xenophon†. The last book of Thucydides has been thought to have been composed by his daughter, or by Xenophon, but it is attributed by Plutarch to Thucydides himself‡.

The events are described with great spirit; and from the age of Demosthenes, who transcribed the history eight times, to that of Charles the Fifth, who made it his constant companion, it has been admired alike for the accuracy of its representations, and the energetic conciseness of its style.

* Κτημά ἐς αἰ. L. i. § 22. p. 18. Edit. Duker.

† Fabric. Biblio. Græc. lib. ii. c. 25.

‡ De Garrulitate, p. 513.

The oracle at Delphi seems to have given an extensive and permanent effect to this disastrous war, by recommending to the inhabitants of Epidamnus, to place the city under the protection of the Corinthians*, which drew on the most fatal consequences.

The conduct of the different nations, when palliated, or extolled by the historian, affords few proofs of moderation or equity. Pericles, in an eloquent oration to the memory of those who perished in the first campaign, flatters the popular feeling, by dilating on the virtues of the Athenians. Their aggrandizement, and the gratification of revenge, constitute prominent subjects of his praise; and a faint intimation of happiness following upon the close of an honourable life, is holden out as an imperfect consolation to the surviving friends. The oration has been thought to resemble the 2d Epistle to the Corinthians. St. Paul, however, when he preached, probably from the same spot†, the assurance of the resurrection, exhorted the people to repent‡: and certainly the tremendous plague which, in the following

* Lib. i. § 2. 5. p. 21.

† Pausan. lib. i. p. 68. edit. Lips. 1696.

‡ Acts xvii, 21—32.

summer desolated Athens, did not indicate the divine sanction to the ambitious and vindictive sentiments which prevailed *.

The affecting detail of the devastation which took place illustrates what is the usual result of physical calamities, a direful effect on the moral conduct of men †. Lucretius, and probably Ovid and Boccacio, borrowed much from it.

It is recorded of the Emperor Charles the Vth, that he carried about with him a French translation of this work in his expeditions.

* Hist. lib. ii. § 36. p. 133. et seq.

† Lib. i. § 25. p. 21. Edit. Duker. l. ii. § 36—42. p. 119—124.

CHAP. XIV.

Xenophon.

THE works of Xenophon are particularly valuable, as well from the information which they afford with respect to character and events, as for the rectitude of sentiment which pervades the whole course of his representations and reflections.

The style is remarkably simple, unaffected, and perspicacious ; the histories which he has furnished, if embellished with some circumstances introduced with design to render his examples impressive, appear still to adhere more strictly to truth and reality, than those of writers who apparently disclaim fictitious ornament, and merely relate events as they occurred.

The historian employed his engaging powers in delineating the portraits of two most interesting personages of Pagan his-

tory, Cyrus and Socrates, one a subject of Hebrew prophecy, the other the highest model of Heathen virtue.

He has recorded also the circumstances of an expedition in which he was present, having passed through countries, a rapid description of which presented objects which are referred to by the inspired writers, and having collected information which demonstrates the completion of predictions in Scripture.

Xenophon was the son of Gryllus of the tribe of Ægeis, and born 440, or some say 450 years before Christ. He was a disciple of Socrates, together with Plato whom he emulated, and had frequent opportunities of contemplating his distinguished master in public and private life.

He experienced his friendly aid extended to him amidst the dangers of a defeat and scattered flight to which the Athenians were exposed at Delium, a town in Bœotia, when having fallen from his horse, Socrates, who himself had been dismounted and compelled to fly, carried him off upon his shoulders for many stadia, till the flight was stopped*.

Xenophon adhered with fidelity to So-

* Strabo, lib. ix. p. 585. Edit. Oxon.

crates through life. He asserted his character, defended him by an affecting apology, and transmitted his virtues and sentiments, with impressive effect, to all succeeding times.

The historian obtained the favour of the younger Cyrus, and accompanied him in his march to attack his brother Artaxerxes.

He records, in a very striking account, the failure and death of Cyrus, who, having hurried on an impetuous march, perished in the first engagement, after a personal conflict with his brother, at Cunaxa, a memorable victim to uncontrouled and vindictive passions.

The division, in which Xenophon had voluntarily served, was victorious, but from the defeat of the rest of the army, a surrender or retreat became necessary. The latter was preferred by this brave and distinguished band, and it was conducted with admirable courage, perseverance, and skill. Xenophon, having been elected to a command, greatly distinguished himself; and by the description of the retreat, which he has bequeathed to us, he has immortalized his fame and that of his companions*.

* *Κύριε Αναβάσεις.*

After his return he attached himself to Agesilaus, and served under him in Asia, and at the battle of Coronea; Cicero relates that he was much esteemed by the Spartan king, who profited by his instruction*. Xenophon's adherence, however, to the cause of a rival nation, subjected him to the resentment of his countrymen; and, after an active life spent in military service, he experienced the common fate of eminent men among the Athenians, being proscribed his country, and driven to pass the remainder of his days in banishment at Scillus, at Leprium, and at Corinth. His personal character, wealth, and talents threw a lustre over his exile. He promoted works of ornament and utility: and encouraged agriculture, of which he speaks with ardour in his *Œconomics*.

His leisure was employed also in finishing his literary productions, composed in all the purity of the Attic style†, and in publishing the works of Thucydides which were deposited in his hands. He continued his history, leaving only two years interval, which does not appear to have been filled up, or the work has been lost.

* De Orat. L. iii. § 34.

† Cicero de Orator. L. ii. § 14.

It has been observed, that Xenophon adorned philosophy by his words and actions. His disinterested and considerate character appeared in the preservation of Byzantium from the plunder of his disappointed and turbulent soldiers on their return from Asia. His patriotism and resignation to the Divine will, were shewn upon the occasion of his receiving an account that his son had died gloriously at the battle of Mantinea, upon which he said only, that he knew he had begotten a mortal*.

Having attained his 90th year, he died about 360 years before Christ.

The works of Xenophon, which are now extant, amount to thirty-seven, exclusively of letters. They do not indicate any particular acquaintance with the sacred writings, but as they furnish, perhaps, the most striking illustrations of the Heathen character, when pourtrayed in its most perfect forms, they are eminently useful in enabling us to judge of its defects, or comparative worth; and the scattered particulars, which we proceed to consider, may be regarded as tending to

* Fabricius ad Xenophon. The same story is related of Euripides.

strengthen the general conclusion deducible from the present work.

The character of the elder Cyrus, as viewed under the light, in which it is displayed by Xenophon, exhibits a noble example of those qualities, which become a sovereign, and enables us to understand why he is stiled in Scripture, "the Shepherd of God," and employed by the Almighty to perform his pleasure, by fulfilling his decrees to the accomplishment of prophecy, effecting the destruction of Babylon in the manner exactly foretold *, and the laying again of the foundation of his holy temple †. The historian represents him at his death, as expressing a belief in the immortality of the soul, and as endowed with a spirit of prescience.

The work, which is described as the *Memorabilia*, or *Memoirs of Socrates*, by a title which is applied also by Justin Martyr to the Gospel ‡, exhibits a narration or detail of the discourses and actions of Socrates. It supplies us with a correct statement of his senti-

* *Cyropæd.* 4—7.

† *Isaiah* xliv. 28. xlv. 1—6, and xxist Chap. (Vol. I.) of this work.

‡ *Απομνημονεύματα.*

ments, and records his discourses with much less of fictitious addition, than Plato seems to have introduced into his representation of them. The description, which the book affords of the character of Socrates, is particularly entitled to consideration: and, since this philosopher was confessedly the highest example of Pagan antiquity, and has even been allowed to be brought in some measure into comparison with our Lord, as an Heathen type of the Messiah, it may not be inexpedient to make some observations on his character.

Socrates appears to have been a man eminent for wise and virtuous conduct, and to have employed himself upon noble and benevolent principles, in communicating instruction to others, conversing freely with men of every description, directing them by his wisdom and experience, and making the forum as it were a school of philosophy.

In the farther display of character, this great moralist manifested fortitude, prudence, and a noble resignation under the sentence and endurance of death. He seems to have entertained a respect for religion, and to have adopted doctrines upon

the subject, beyond those of vulgar apprehension, though from a regard to the laws, he enjoined a conformity to existing constitutions.

It is not clear what character Socrates ascribes to the Genius, by whose counsels he professed to be directed, whether he considered it as an inward consciousness of rectitude, or an invisible monitor assigned to him by divine favour. In his reasoning with others, he grounded his notions principally on earthly considerations, professing and enjoining temperance, and an observance of the relative duties, as tending to liberate men from the tyranny of evil passions, but with little expression of regard to the power of the Supreme Being. He speaks of his own actions with much complacency, comparing himself with others. He seems to have enjoined virtue, rather from considerations of advantage, than of duty, and to have regarded religion as a political institute; hence we find him inculcating a respect for it, on motives of submission to human laws; and his morality, though often of a higher cast than that of other writers, appears in many points defective, while he frames his

principles upon narrow views of expediency, and estimates actions by their immediate consequences. The instruction, therefore, which he gives, is often of an ordinary cast, irksome by its repetitions, and occasionally debased by sophistry ; he carries on his reasoning, however, by series of questions leading to some useful conclusion, and endeavours to deduce truths of remote investigation from simple and evident propositions. There are other obvious defects and imperfections in his character and instructions ; thus for instance, while we contemplate with veneration our blessed Saviour commanding a convicted adulteress to “ go, and sin no more,” we observe Socrates teaching a courtesan the art of engaging men of affluence in her snares. If we regard his moral lessons, we find him representing the sale of those to slavery, who were born free, as an act of injustice, but he does not declare against slavery altogether. He gives a precept similar to that which our Saviour has contrasted with his own divine instruction, namely, that we should do good to those that do good to us, a maxim far short of the lesson of the Gospel, which bids us “ to love our enemies, to bless them “ that curse us, to do good to them that

“ hate us, and to pray for them which des-
 “ pitefully use and persecute us.” He seems,
 however to have intimated ■ forgiveness of
 his enemies at his death, and justly observes,
 that none but the Gods could make laws
 perfect. He gives deplorable proofs of the
 want of right knowledge, and of the de-
 pravity of Heathen manners, particularly
 in stating that there were some among his
 countrymen who intermarried with their own
 children *.

The manner, in which Socrates speaks of
 the divine nature of the soul, is elevated and
 affecting. From its capacity and surpassing
 endowments, he argues the power and pro-
 vidence of God, and his disposition to ren-
 der man happy. He represents God as the
 soul of the universe : and justly observes,
 that if the mind has power to take in many
 objects, though placed at a great distance,
 it ought not to be a subject of wonder,
 if the eye of the Deity can, at one glance,
 comprehend the whole ; and as it exceeded
 not the ability of man to extend his care at
 the same time to the concerns of Athens,
 Egypt, and Sicily, why should it be deemed
 unreasonable, that the providence of God

* Plato, Φαιδων. Απομνημο. lib. iv.

should extend its direction throughout the whole universe?

He concludes with the following admonition which is well worthy of consideration ;

“ As therefore, among men, we make best
 “ trial of the affection and gratitude of our
 “ neighbour, by showing him kindness; and
 “ discover his wisdom, by consulting him in
 “ our distress ; do thou in like manner behave
 “ towards the gods : and, if thou wouldst
 “ experience what their wisdom, and what
 “ their love is, render thyself deserving the
 “ communication of some of those divine se-
 “ crets, which may not be penetrated by man,
 “ and which are imparted to those alone who
 “ consult, who adore, who obey the Deity :
 “ then shalt thou, my Aristodemus, under-
 “ stand that there is a Being, whose eye
 “ pierceth throughout all nature, and whose
 “ ear is open to every sound, extending to all
 “ place, pervading all time, and whose bounty
 “ and care can know no other bounds, than
 “ those fixed by his own creation*.”

Whether we consider these as the sentiments of Socrates or Xenophon, is of little consequence, since there was much congeniality in their religious opinions.

* Memoirs of Socrates, Fielding's Translat. c. 4.

Socrates, at his death, expressed his belief in the immortality of the soul*, and upon a general view of his religious opinions, we are led to think that he really believed those great truths which he taught, and that while he inculcated a respect for the public institutions chiefly from regard only to their political utility, he entertained a firm conviction of many sublime tenets, which he had collected as traditionary maxims of natural or revealed religion, though he sometimes speaks with apparent hesitation, being unwilling to dogmatize.

Xenophon, affords, in many instances strong confirmation of the truth of the relations and doctrines of Scripture. He describes the death of Belshazzar, the taking of Babylon†, and the appointment of the princes of Cyrus, over the nations whom he subdued‡, in the same manner as Jeremiah and Daniel foretel them.

In expressing sentiments in his own name, he observes, that it is neither numbers or strength which confer victory, but God §.

* *Κυροταίδια*. Plato. *Γοργίας*.

† Jerem. li. 39, 57. Dan. v. comp. with *Κύροταίδια*, lib. v. and vii.

‡ Xenophon, *Inst.* 8. comp. Dan. iv. 1. and Esther i. 14. See also Plato de *Legibus*, lib. iii. p. 147.

§ *Αναξαρ*. compare with Prov. xxi. 31.

Xenophon gives pleasing illustrations of that vivid and exact fidelity of representation which appears also in the description of the sacred writers when they speak of the scenes of nature, of the productions of the earth, or of the animals which range abroad under the care of Providence.

His rapid sketch of that part of Syria, which was in Mesopotamia*, covered with towns, and abounding in corn and wine†, corresponds with many reports of its population and fertility. In his transitory view also of the desert of Arabia, he discovered many circumstances, which illustrate, in a striking manner, particulars beautifully alluded to in the Book of Job, who lived in some part of Arabia. “There, in a plain level
 “as the sea, and devoid of trees, but every
 “where fragrant with aromatic shrubs and
 “reeds,” he observed, “the wild asses which
 “the horsemen were accustomed to chase,
 “flying with unequal speed, so that the ani-
 “mals would often stop their course, and,
 “when the horsemen approached, disap-
 “pear, and they could not be taken, unless

* *Αναβάσ.* § 16. *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. c. 12. et Strab. lib. xvi.*

† *Κύρη Αναβάσ.* lib. iv. c. 18.

“ the horsemen, placing themselves in different parts, wearied them by relays in successive pursuits.”

This cannot but remind us of the passage in the Book of Job : “ Who hath sent out the wild ass free ; or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass ; whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.” What Xenophon states also of the ostrich frequently seen in the same extended wilderness is deserving of attention, “ None could take an ostrich ; the horsemen, who pursued them soon giving it over : for they flew far away, making use both of their feet to run, and of their wings, when expanded, as a sail to waft them along*.” This brings to our recollection the sacred description of the bird in the Book of Job : “ What time she lifteth herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider †.”

* *Κυρον' αναβροσις*, lib. i. See Spelman's translation.

† Job xxxix. 13.

Scipio Africanus and Lucullus greatly admired the works of Xenophon, and are said to have derived much advantage from them in the formation of their characters. Quintilian applies to him what had been said of Pericles, that some goddess of persuasion sat on his lips *. The writings which he has bequeathed to us are particularly remarkable for perspicuity, and they are valuable as illustrating many modes of expression used by the writers of the New Testament †.

* See also Lucian, πῶς δεῖ ἱστορεῖν, p. 630, Edit. Amstel. 1687.

† Vid. Annot. Philol. in Nov. Test. ex Xenophonte Collect. a M. Georgii Raphelio, Hamburg. 1709.

CHAP. XV.

Plato.

PLATO appears to have been of an Athenian family, settled at Colyttus—the son of Ariston, and born about 430 years before Christ—some suppose in the Archonship of Apollodorus *. He is said to have had royal ancestors, and to have traced his maternal descent from Solon.

Plato in early life was engaged in military service, and afterwards was so distinguished for his talents, that he might have had a direction in public affairs, but he preferred the pursuits of science, and the search after truth in the retirement of private life. He was a disciple of Socrates, and took a zealous part in his defence, and, upon failure

* Laert. lib. i. 4. Athenæ. *Δεξιπυλο*. lib. v. and Stanley's Hist. of Philosophy.

of his exertions, retired in grief to Megara. He instituted a sect which took its name from the academy at Athens, in which its professors taught. This sect was continued by Speusippus, Xenocrates, and others. He appears to have travelled much, and was highly esteemed by Archelaus, king of Macedonia; and by Dionysius the younger, who twice, at the suggestion of Dion, invited him to his court, but, becoming jealous of him, he soon ceased to be directed by his advice.

Plato resorted to Egypt, and abode some time at Sais. Ambrose states, that it was with a particular view to inform himself with respect to the actions and oracles of Moses, and of the sayings of the prophets; he is particularly reported to have received intelligence at Heliopolis, from a Jew named Sechnuphis; he afterwards travelled into other countries* of the East. It is believed, that he obtained much information from the writings of the Jewish prophets†. Some

* Ad Psalm cxviii. et Lib. de Noe et Arca. c. 8.

† Euseb. præp. Evan. lib. ix. c. 5. and lib. xi. Clem. Strom. Selden de Jure Natur. et Gentium, lib. i. c. 2. p. 84.

have supposed, that he had intercourse with Jeremiah, or as others say more consistently with chronology, with Nehemiah or Malachi. All Christian antiquity affirms, that he borrowed from sacred sources.

Plato himself has candidly confessed, that he obtained his best and chief divinity from the Phœnicians, particularly concerning the fraternal relation subsisting between all men, as made out of the earth, alluding, it should seem to the formation of Adam. It is probable, that by the Phœnicians he meant the Hebrews *. He mentions also Syrian fables or traditions, which he describes as ineffable ; and though he disguised many things which he borrowed, Clement of Alexandria styles him the Hebrew Philosopher, and refers to passages, which speak of a deluge, and of a future destruction of the earth by fire †. Justin Martyr also says, that he drew many things from the Hebrew fountain, especially his pious conceptions concerning God and his worship ‡. Even Porphyry confesses,

* Hammond on Matt. xv. 22. Bochart, Phaleg. lib. iv. 34.

† Cohort. ad Gen. c. 20, 21. p. 60. Strom. lib. v. c. 235. p. 649, 650. Euseb. præp. Evan. lib. ix. c. 6. lib. x. c. 1. Huet. Demonst. Evang. Prop. 4.

‡ Apol. 2. Gale, Selden, &c.

that he borrowed much from the Hebrews *, and Numenius remarks, that he was none other than Moses speaking in Greek †. He treats of the Supreme Being in various passages with a comprehension and sublimity of thought, which seem to rise beyond the highest reach of unassisted reason. He considers God as the beginning, middle, and end of all things ‡, and he blames philosophers for ascribing to a second cause what might be attributed to a first §. He appears, however, to have formed erroneous notions of the eternity of the world, and to have spoken too strongly of the malignity of human nature, as if not reducible even by the power of God. It has been well observed of Plato, that no writer has more judiciously inculcated the obligations of social life on the foundation of reason and truth, or raised stronger bulwarks in defence of its civil institutions. He has erected the structure of government on the rock of nature, and excited the reverence of mankind by the

* Theo. cont. Græc. et Euseb. lib. i.

+ Joseph. cont. Apion, lib. ii. Euseb. præp. Evan. Suidas

iv νομικοις.

‡ De Legib. tom. ii, lib. iv. p. 715. Edit. Stephan.

§ Phædo.

solidity of its basis, and by the height of its muniments and towers. He gives an account which is probably borrowed from what is related by the inspired writer, of God's having brought the creatures which he had formed unto Adam, saying, it is most true, that a power more than human gave the first names to things, so that we must needs think that they were rightly given*.

Justin Martyr remarks, that when Plato says, "it is the fault of man who chuses, but God is without fault†;" he borrowed it from Moses; and that what he observed in his Timæus, concerning the Son of God, speaking physically and naturally, "He cut him in the form of a cross‡," was taken from Moses, who relates, that he placed a fiery serpent upon a pole (in the form of a cross probably) in the wilderness, whoever looked upon which, after being bitten, was healed.

In his *Φαίδων*, ἥ περὶ ψυχῆς, in confirming

* Cratyl. p. 390. Edit. Stephan. and Jackson Chron. Antiq. p. 21. Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xi. c. 6.

† De Repub. lib. x. p. 617. et Just. Martyr. Apol. p. 67. Edit. Thirl.

‡ *Εχίσαν αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ πατι*, ad Timæ. p. 36. Numb. xxi. 6—9, and Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. p. 78. Edit. Paris. 742.

the doctrine of the immortality of the soul by various arguments, he confesses that a certain demonstration of the doctrine could not be adduced, at least, without great difficulty in the present life, unless some one should be able to support himself upon a more firm and secure reliance than is obtainable,—as on a divine word *. He elsewhere seems to look forward to more sufficient instruction than had hitherto appeared.

Panætius and others have expressed some doubts as to the authenticity of this dialogue, but it is pronounced to be genuine by Fabricius, on the authority of ancient writers. The doubts indeed seem rather to have related to the consideration, whether it was to be regarded as a truly Socratic dialogue †.

We learn from Florus, that Cato read this work a little before his death. This distinguished man, on hearing the event of the battle of Philippi, resolved to put an end to his existence; and having dismissed his sons and attendants when in the camp be-

* *Λόγον θείου τινας.*

† Fabricius, *Plat. Script. Edit. lib. xi.*

fore Utica, devoted some time to a perusal of the reflections it contains on the immortality of the soul, and after having retired for a short time to rest, he rose about the first watch, and it is said then struck himself twice on the breast with his sword. He suffered the physicians to attempt to heal the wounds, but at their departure tore them open, and a profusion of blood rushing forth, he expired leaving his dead hands in the wounds*.

Different effects seem to have resulted to persons of different dispositions from perusing this dialogue. Cleombrotus destroyed himself after reading it: and Olympiodorus affirms that he should have wished to have quitted life, had he not been certain of the future state of the soul, from reading the *Phædo* of Plato. Speculative works of this nature, without authority beyond what human claims to regard might establish, must be expected to have had but light and precarious effect. Plato's works seem to have produced but little impression on Aristotle †. It however not seldom happens, that men of

* Florus, lib. iv. c. 2. p. 391. Edit. Amstel.

† Theod. lib. v.

acute minds, and most accustomed to carry on investigations of reasoning, are but little affected by the clearest arguments ; the subtilty of their judgment sometimes escapes from conclusions, which press on a plain understanding. Daniel Heinsius composed a poem on the contempt of death, which has been much admired for its beauty, and is chiefly founded on the arguments of this work. The *Phædo* contains certainly much strong and clear reasoning, though, like other Heathen productions, it was written only under a partial light, and is injured by the intermixture of fanciful notions concerning the pre-existence and future migration of the soul.

Some have conceived, that what Plato says, with respect to the pre-existence of the soul, may be only a corruption of the doctrine of an original condition of man in Paradise, from which he was degraded to a state of punishment *. His arguments, however, with regard to the inherent energies of the soul, might seem to imply its eternal and independent nature, which is more than he intended. The Heathen philosophy is never perfect in its principles, and its theories, de-

* Cont. Origen. Cels. lib. iv. p. 189.

fective as they are, if collected together from the different works in which they are scattered, would compose a code of morality open to great objections. With respect to Plato* in particular, his ethical and metaphysical writings often betray the insufficiency of the highest discoveries of human reason.

He exposes with much force the existing superstitions, but speaks however with assurance of a state of future rewards and punishments ; and the just convictions, which he entertained upon this, and other points, together with the coincidences of sentiment between him and the sacred writers, and the use which he made of Scriptural figures and language, speaking of angels, demons, &c. led to an extravagant admiration of him. It is observable, that he divides his republic into twelve tribes, and that he assigns the houses and fields by lot, considering like Joshua, that God was the disposer of lots † ; he exhibits also, in imitation of the Divine precepts, that if a beast killed a man it should be put to death ‡. He prohibits the removal

* See *defence des Peres accusés de Platonism*, par Thomas Baltus.

† Josh. xviii. 10. Prov. xvi. 33. Plat. de Legib. 115. Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. xii. c. 47.

‡ Plato de Legib. 18. Exod. xxi. 28.

of landmarks in a manner similar to that of Moses ; and he, in imitation of Moses, does not impose any penalty on killing a thief before sun-rise *. He directs also, that a thief should be compelled to restore double † ; and that if he had not wherewithal he should be sold ‡.

Casaubon and Grotius express their opinion, that Plato did actually, and not without the instinct of Providence, employ expressions in speaking of a just Man, which fore-shewed Christ's sufferings ; the words are indeed striking : " He shall be beaten by stripes, he shall be tortured, he shall be bound, he shall be deprived of sight, and in the end suffering all evils he shall be crucified §."

Plato seems to have known, that man was created after other living things ||. He speaks of the divine origin of language ¶, and of

* Aristot. Polit. 3. 10. Exod. xxii. 2. Cyril com. in Jonam.

† Plat. et Aulus Gell. 20. 1. see also Euseb. lib. xii. c. 40.

‡ Exod. xxii. 4.

§ The expression is remarkable, ἀνασχίνδευσθήσεται, which Eusebius and Hesychius render in crucem tolletur. See Plato de Repub. 2. p. 361, 362, Euseb. præp. Evan. lib. xii. c. 10. Grotius in Matt. x. 38. Casaubon de Credulit. and Watson's Apol. p. 208.

|| Protagoras, p. 320, 321.

¶ Comp. Gen. ii. 19. with Socrat. in Cratyl. Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. i. c. 6. and Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacrae, lib. i. c. 1.

a golden age, and was fully sensible of the decline from virtue which had been experienced, and of the corruption to which the world had arrived in his time. His conviction, that mankind required some instructor to enlighten the human mind, and that some one would be deputed from Heaven for that purpose, seems to have led him to remark in his second Alcibiades, that it was necessary to wait till some one should teach, how it became men to conduct themselves towards God and their fellow creatures; and Alcibiades is made to reply, “when
 “ will this time come, O Socrates, and who
 “ will be the instructor? for it appears to
 “ me that it will be most delightful to see
 “ this man, and what kind of person he shall
 “ be*.”

There are various passages in Plato's works, in which he speaks often enigmatically of a triad of persons in the Divine nature †: and he notices the story of one “and many,” that is, of the Trinity, which the ancients, who dwelt nearer the gods than he, had transmitted. It has been observed, in treating of the

* Alcibiad. lib. ii. p. 150.

† Epist. ii. ad Dionys. p. 312. de Legibus. Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. xi. c. 20. and Cudworth, c. 4.

works of Philo, that some notions of a Trinity prevailed before or about the time of Christ ; and there is no doubt that the Jews of Palestine had some apprehension of the personal nature and Godhead of the Word, (the Angel of the covenant) and of the Holy Ghost, who is often spoken of in the Old Testament in a manner, which implies real existence, and not an allegorical personification. How long they had maintained such apprehension, it would be difficult at this time to determine. Gibbon, in a spirit of misrepresentation, insinuates that the Jews of Alexandria derived their opinion from the writings of Plato, whom he supposes to have formed the persuasion from some vague and fanciful speculations. There is good ground, however, to maintain, that a belief in the Divine nature of the three persons prevailed long before the time of Plato* ; and the intimations furnished upon the subject by the prophets, led, it must be conceived, to these apprehensions, and established some just conclusions as preparatory to the full disclosure of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Jews seem to have expected the second person to

* Allix. Judgment of the Jewish Church, and Horsley's 12th Letter to Priestley.

come as the Messiah; and though Christ was crucified for what they supposed to be blasphemy, in calling himself the Son of God, thus making himself equal with God, it was because he did so, when he appeared under the supposed meanness of human birth, destitute of earthly distinctions, and exposed to human suffering.

The Jews revered wisdom also, as that which existed in the beginning before the creation of the heaven and earth*, and Justin Martyr supposes, that Plato derived his notion of a third person from this spirit of Wisdom.

It is probable that the opinions of Plato, with respect to the second and third persons of the Trinity, however he might have changed the doctrines, were originally deduced from these well founded convictions. It is perfectly known, that he was accustomed to wrap up Jewish traditions in fables and parables, concealing particularly what he procured from a people, who were disliked by the vulgar †.

* Prov. viii. 22—31. Matt. xi. 19.

† Origen. cont. Cels. lib. iv.

— maintains a Trinity of divine Hypostases ; each of them an eternal, uncreated, and universal being, and all existing in union*. He characterises the first as the supreme Nature ; the second, as Mind or Intellect ; the Artificer of the World ; the third, as the Soul of the World, spoken of under different representations ; and considered, according to the expression of Cudworth, as the concrete form of the world † ; these three necessary existing and universal beings compose the Platonic Trinity, but differing from that of the Christian, as not stating the same essence in the Godhead of each, or an absolute co-equality, and admitting a disparity between the first and the second, which is not allowed in the Christian faith, when it admits the mysterious subordination of the Son to be implied in the relation resulting from the precedency of the Father.

In the first century, the opinions of Plato were propagated with much eagerness, being thought to concur with the orthodox doctrines of the church. The early Christians,

* Epist. ii. p. 312. Apol. p. 87.

† Cudworth, b. i. c. 4. Basnage's Hist. of the Jews, vol. iv. b. 4. p. 54—56. Le Clerc, Emen. Crit. vii.

noticing, in particular, the conformity between the Platonic and the Evangelical system, in those points which relate to the Trinity, accustomed themselves to speak in language, common to the academy and to the Church; hence they were accused of Platonizing.

The notions of the followers of Plato, were insensibly added to the opinions of that philosopher; and being recommended under the sanction of his name, contributed to the corruption of the true faith. Porphyry endeavoured to blend them and other Pagan fancies, with the doctrines of Christianity, which he received, so as to combine the whole into one system.

In the dark ages, which succeeded, the opinions of Plato were generally extolled without being understood, and they became the subject of eager controversy; the effect was certainly very unfavourable to religion. Bellarmine told Clement, that Plato, by approaching so near to Christianity, produced a tendency to injure it, by the subtle errors, which crept in under his authority.

The moral precepts of Plato are often stamped with peculiar excellency and adaptation to existing manners. In his ἡ περὶ

πρακτῆ ἠθικός he inculcates a contempt of popular opinion, which was particularly necessary at Athens, amidst a fickle and fluctuating people; a patient endurance of calamities; an abstaining from revenge; and an elevation of the mind, directing itself to things honest and eternal; his views, however, are often defective and exceptionable. He evidently represents that policy and those laws as best, in which a community of wives and of children, as well as of riches, should be allowed*. Clement of Alexandria endeavours to put a construction upon his words which they will not bear, representing him as recommending only common right in all, to lay claim to those that were unmarried†. In other instances, Plato expresses sentiments which are utterly unjustifiable.

The opinions of this great writer are brought forth with distinguished eloquence, and Cicero seems to speak with admiration of his intelligence and power of language. The beauty and modulation of his periods have given his style a kind of middle character between prose and poetry.

* De Legibus, vol. ii. lib. v. p. 739. Edit. Stephan. 1578.

† Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. iii. § 2. p. 515.

CHAP. XVI.

Aristophanes.

ARISTOPHANES was an Athenian, the son of Philip; he lived about 434 years before the birth of Christ. His eminence as a comic writer is to be estimated by a reference to local and temporary circumstances, and it is well known that the productions, both of the comic and tragic muse, were of great importance at Athens; the disposition of the people inclining them much to delight in the drama, particularly in those satirical comedies, which were rendered subservient to the expression of political feelings, and of enmity to individuals. The licence, permitted in this respect, was carried to a great extent; and the failings of men of the highest worth were allowed to become the subject of ludicrous exposure and derision. Aristophanes was accustomed not only to satirize the Athenians at large, but he particularly directed his severity against Euripides in his

Frogs, and in his Thesmophoriazusæ. In the Clouds he represented Socrates as instructing a youth to become a sophist, who is rendered as much disposed to defend wrong as right; and in his *Ιππεις*, he attacked Cleon a demagogue, and occasioned his being fined five talents*.

His comedy, entitled *Ειρήνη*, produced great effect, being performed when the Athenians, and all the Grecians indeed, wearied with the Peloponnesian war, were panting for peace†. Eleven plays only remain of above fifty which Aristophanes produced: they are written with remarkable purity of style; it was this excellency, it may be presumed, which rendered his works highly esteemed by Plato and Chrysostom, and indeed induced the former to recommend them to Dionysius as models of language; the latter writer acquired probably from them that sharp, and vehement severity of censure, particularly of women, in which he expressed his reprehensions.

The nature of the writings of Aristophanes

* Vid. Fabric. in Aristoph. Comed. lib. ii. c. 21.

† Tetzels Chil. xii. Hist. 436.

will preclude the expectation of much that may have reference to particulars, connected with the subject of this work ; it appears however, that in the play entitled, the Birds, there is a passage containing in a kind of burlesque representation some of those traditional notions, which the Grecians of his time derived, probably from the Phœnicians, with respect to Chaos and the original rudiments of creation, formed at the beginning.

The chorus represents Chaos and Night, black Erebus and broad Tartarus to have existed before the earth, the air, or the heavens. It describes dark winged night to have produced first an inflated egg in the boundless bosom of Erebus, from which, in the revolution of time, desirable love sprang forth, radiant with golden wings on his shoulders, swift as the raging winds. It states love, mixing with black winged Chaos, to have hatched the race of birds amidst the broad shadows of Tartarus, and to have brought them forth to light ; that afterwards, by an intermixture effected by love, the heavens, the ocean, and the earth were produced, and the immortal race of blessed gods.

This passage of Aristophanes * is quoted by Lucian † and Suidas. It resembles the cosmogony of Hesiod. The chorus speaks also of man's being formed of mud, and compares him to a dream. One of Aristophanes' plays is stiled νεφέλαι, the clouds, and it is observable that the centaurs were called υἱοὶ νεφελῶν. The Hebrew word, נפלים, has been thought to signify apostates from the true worship, from נפל to contend. It is not known to what age Aristophanes attained; his Plutus was produced in the last year of the 97th Olympiad, about 388 years before Christ. Plato wrote an epigram upon him to the following effect ‡.

The graces sought a lasting Fane to find,
And took possession of the poet's mind.

Aristophanes adopted the philosophical opinion, which prevailed among the more enlightened of his countrymen, distinguishing between Jupiter and the rest of the Gods §.

* Ορνιθες. l. 693—703. Edit. Brunck. vol. ii.

† See Philopatris.

‡ Αἱ χάριτες τέμειός τι λαβεῖν ὅπερ ἔχ' ἐπισείτ' αἱ
Ζητῆσαι, ψυχὴν εὖρον Ἀριστοφάνους.

§ Πλατῶ.

He ridicules, with much keenness, the deities of the populace. Plato is said to have sent the works of Aristophanes to Dionysius, not only for their style, but also as exhibiting a faithful representation of the Athenians and of the language used by them. The people who could be delighted with such coarse and illiberal satire against their most eminent men, must have had as little regard to truth and justice as to correct judgment and taste, the gross indelicacies which they tolerated presented the most disgusting proofs of the corruption of heathen manners.

CHAP. XVII.

Aristotle.

ARISTOTLE was born at Stagyra, a town of Thrace, on the river Strymon, towards the commencement of the 99th Olympiad, in the prætorship of Diotrephes, 384 years before Christ. He was the son of Nichomachus, a reputed descendant of Æsculapius, and the physician of king Amyntas, the grandfather of Alexander*. He was for some years a disciple of Plato at Athens; upon the death of that philosopher, he retired to Atarnea, a city of Mysia, and married Pythia, the daughter or relation of Hermias the reigning prince, upon whose deposition Aristotle went to Mitylene, being invited by Philip to his court, to undertake the charge of Alexander's education, who had attained the age of fifteen. He en-

* Ammon. vit. Arist. 1.

gaged in that important office, and remained some years with him, inspiring him with a love of literature, and particularly with that admiration of the works of Homer, which had always a great influence on his mind, and conspired perhaps to lead him to the formation of his great designs*.

Upon Alexander's proceeding on his expedition into Persia, Aristotle, if he accompanied him a short time, soon returned to Athens, and established his Peripatetic sect at the Lyceum, each of these illustrious men striking into a path which led to great distinction; Aristotle to explore the regions of science, and Alexander to subdue the world. Aristotle, with whom the conqueror corresponded, instructed him to accommodate his government to the different genius of the several nations, which he might overcome, and to consult their dispositions, manners, and habits.

The mind of the pupil, as well as that of the master, was imbued with the love of philosophy. Alexander, indeed, upon a principle somewhat confined and inconsistent with the usual greatness of his mind, seems to

* Euseb. Præp. Evan. Fabric. &c.

have wished to preserve a pre-eminence to be derived rather from the ignorance of the general classes, than from the extension of his own knowledge; and in this view he blamed Aristotle for having published his Acroatic works, and thereby imparted to the public the elevated doctrines which they contained, observing that he would rather excel others in wisdom, than govern kingdoms.

It is remarkable, that Aristotle does not comment on the want of liberality in this sentiment, but observes only, that the doctrines, though published, would not be understood but by those, who had attended his lectures.

It is possible, however, that Alexander wished to restrict the publication only of the more abstruse doctrines of religion, as in general he promoted the advancement of knowledge; and his connection with the philosopher led to important consequences: since during his expedition he furnished him with animals sent at a great expence for his inspection, and thereby enabled him to carry on his researches into natural history, on which subject he wrote fifty books, ten of

which have been transmitted to us, besides five on the parts, and generation of animals.

Aristotle remained thirteen years at Athens, where he established the Peripatetic school in the Lyceum*; and on the death of Alexander, which some have, with little probability, accused him of having accelerated†, he repaired to Chalcis, and is said to have terminated his own existence by poison, in the seventieth year of his age‡; or to have thrown himself into the Euripus; his mind having been harassed, as some represent, by a fruitless endeavour to understand some extraordinary phenomena in the reciprocation of the tides in the river§, thus illustrating the vanity of human wisdom, and terminating his life about the same time with Demosthenes, and with as little credit to philosophy. The body of Aristotle was removed by his followers to Stagyra, which Philip had rebuilt, from respect to his character, after great part of it had been destroyed; and memorials of the philosopher were long after preserved

* Diogen. Laert. lib. v. segm. 2, 3.

† Plutarch's Alex. p. 77. Arrian. c. 27. Pliny, &c.

‡ Diogen. Laert. Athen. lib. xv.

§ See Browne's Pseudodox. Epidem. lib. vii. c. 13.

in that city. His opinions corresponded in many points with those of Plato, though in some respects he differed much from him. He prosecuted his enquiries with the sagacity of a mind distinguished for its acuteness, and employed the highest powers of reasoning to the discovery of philosophical and moral truth; exhibiting occasionally in his writings a display of knowledge beyond what could be obtained by an acquaintance with Heathen sources of information. Some have thought that he borrowed from Hermes Trismegistus.

Johannes Zeisoldus wrote a book, in order to shew what Aristotle might have been supposed to have derived from the light of nature in agreement with Scripture, and what he maintained in consistency with the communications furnished by the Hebrew writers*.

Eusebius remarks, that many persons were led, by instruction obtained from Aristotle, to adopt the principles of true religion; and such a conformity appears between many of his opinions and those of Scripture, that some have affirmed that he embraced the Jewish

* Jenæ. 1661. 4.

faith, and others that he was even born a Jew, being, as they state, a native of Jerusalem, and of the tribe of Benjamin: and it has been further related, that he derived much of his knowledge from the works of Solomon entrusted to him by Alexander, into whose possession they were said to have come, when that monarch entered Jerusalem. Much credit is not to be attached to such accounts: all that can be reasonably concluded (and little will be produced even in support of this opinion) is, that he drew some information from the Jews or their writings. Josephus informs us that Clearchus, a disciple of Aristotle, represented him in his first book on sleep as speaking of a Jew, whom he describes as a person of great worth and urbanity, styling him a heavenly man, and observing that he and his followers, when in Asia, had intercourse with him to the high satisfaction and improvement of those, who had the advantage of his conversation*.

From whatever authority the philosopher drew his convictions, there are many pas-

* Joseph. Cont. Apion, lib. i. § 22.

sages in his works, in which he reasons acutely on religious subjects, and he appears to speak justly of some attributes of the Supreme Being. He was accused, notwithstanding during his life, of atheistical opinions, and of exciting disrespect towards the priesthood, and the religious rites of the country. These charges resulted probably from the publication of opinions, which militated rather against vulgar superstitions, than the general principles of religion. He had, however, an esoteric as well as an exoteric doctrine: some countenance indeed has been given to the charge in modern times, by those who have, it should seem, misconceived his reasoning, and who remark that he says too little of Providence and the immortality of the soul. He appears sometimes to have ascribed eternity to the world, but still under a persuasion of its having emanated, and derived existence from God; and he represents the Theologians to have taught that all things were produced either from life or a confused mixture*; it appears indeed that his object was to explain

* Alex. Strom. lib. v. p. 681.

things by natural causes, without having recourse upon all occasions to the altar; and having respect to traditionary accounts.

He preferred Anaxagoras to the other philosophers, because he assigned a final cause which Aristotle calls nature, and Anaxagoras, mind.—Moses and Plato, God. Thales had preceded Anaxagoras in this opinion. Mosheim states that the God of Aristotle is something like the principle which gives motion to a machine, that it is a nature happy in the contemplation of itself, and entirely regardless of human affairs. The historian remarks, that such a Divinity, who differs little from the God of Epicurus *, cannot reasonably be the object either of love or of fear; and he adds, that with respect to the doctrine of this philosopher concerning the immortality of the soul, it is uncertain, at least, whether he believed in it or not †.

These statements are however inaccurate. Aristotle treats of the Deity metaphysically, with distinct definitions, sometimes am-

* Vid. Lucret. lib. i.

† Mosheim. Eccles. Hist. c. 1. p. 1. and Notes of the Translator. See also Cudworth.

biguously*, but in a manner in general sufficiently consonant to the opinions of Plato, and with attributes sanctioned by, if not derived from revealed accounts. In particular he gives this description of God, that "he is an eternal Being, the best
 " of Beings, an immoveable substance, sepa-
 " rate from sensible things, void of corpo-
 " real quality, without parts and indivisi-
 " ble †." He speaks of the universe as sustained by God, meaning possibly by solar fire ‡. He seems, however, not to have regarded him in the light of a creator, but to have imagined that the world was eternal, and that the stars were inferior deities.

There are many passages, in the works of Aristotle, which display pious affections, and which also demonstrate a love of truth, of humility, and beneficence; and he particularly represents the life of man as best employed when engaged in conferring benefits §.

In his Nichomachian Ethics this passage

* Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. xv. c. 5, 6.

† Stanley's Hist. of Philos. Arist. lib. vi. c. 8. and Arist. Phys. lib. viii. Metaph. vii. 14.

‡ Vol. i. p. 601. Edit. Duval.

§ Vid. Second Epist. to Philip.

occurs: "If God take any care of human things as it seems he doth, then it is reasonable to think also, that he is delighted with that which is best and nearest akin to himself, which is mind or right reason, and that he rewards those who most love and honour it; as taking care of such things as are most pleasing to him, and acting rightly and honourably." This resembles passages in Plato.

He reports, in his *Politics*, that all men affirmed the gods to be under a Sovereign Power, and that there is one Supreme King and Monarch over the gods. There are certainly some erroneous opinions in his works: but from the whole of what he has said upon the important subjects in question, Scaliger considers his religious knowledge as superior to that of Plato *.

Aristotle also speaks in high terms of the mind as distinct from, and not liable to be destroyed with the body. The Book de Pomo, which has been attributed to him, is represented by Manfred to have been translated from the Arabic into Hebrew. It is said to have been published by Aristotle to-

* Exercit. lib. iii. c. 5.

wards the close of life; there is a story of his having holden it in his hands when near his death, while he conversed with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, and endeavoured to reconcile them to the dissolution of the body of clay.

It is to be observed, that Abraham and Noah are mentioned in it as wiser than all men. As however there can be little doubt that the work is the fabrication of a Christian writer, no authority can be given to it *.

Aristotle in his *Ethics* and *Politics*, which form a connected work, illustrates the moral principles, as they operate in the general relations of society, with great judgment and precision. After a perspicacious examination of different systems of legislation, he lays down just principles with respect to the origin and design of civil government, and exposes with great ability many errors, which prevailed in his time. He exhibits extensive knowledge, and powers of mind, every where commensurate to the subject. He reasons with a profound insight into nature, but grounds his motives particularly on human

* Fabrici. lib. iii. c. 6.

approbation, and the interests of the world. He enforces the necessity of obedience to authorities essential to the order and peace of society, and to guard it against the ferocious passions of men, but he expresses a liberal censure on the custom of subjecting prisoners to slavery.

Notwithstanding therefore some of his principles, particularly those in his metaphysical works, have been thought to have a tendency unfavourable to truth, and are enveloped in much obscurity, his great talents are generally employed in supporting the moral interests of mankind which he maintains with much force, and accuracy of judgment.

The productions of Aristotle in different departments of natural philosophy demonstrate the most comprehensive observation of the works of creation, and of the principles upon which the economy of animal life is supported; he displays the most intimate acquaintance with the general and specific distinctions of animals, and he points out many circumstances with respect to their physical economy and treatment, which well deserve the consideration of the naturalist.

The authority, which he established in all countries, has given great weight to his name. He has been regarded by Jewish and Christian writers as well as by the Heathens, as entitled to high respect: and in the earlier ages after the establishment of the Gospel, his decisions were employed in the schools of Europe to refute the errors of Plato, and to support the system of revelation with all the weight of human learning.

Logic, however, which he employed, and which was designed to extricate truth from the mists of error, was at length so eagerly pursued, as to be considered the chief object of attention; and that, which was to be regarded as a subsidiary and assistant instrument towards the attainment of knowledge, became itself the principal concern, and was so perverted in its application as to encumber and fetter the progress of those, who were in search of wisdom.

Cælius Rhodiginus says, that when Aristotle felt the approach of death, he repeated these words, "thou Cause of Causes have mercy on me."

His disciples said, "may he, who receives the soul of philosophers, accept

“ thine likewise, and lay it up in his treasury,
 “ as the soul of a right and perfect man,
 “ which we know thee to be.”

A manuscript is related to have been found in the Vatican, entitled *Eruditiones Philosophicorum*, in which is a prayer that Aristotle is represented to have repeated every morning in the following form, but which probably was the fabrication of some Christian writer :

“ O terrible ! to whose dominion I may submit,
 “ O eternal ! who never ceasest to reign,
 “ And Author of all things,
 “ Save me from thy great fire.”

There are also some predictions, referring to the incarnation of Christ, which were pretended to have been collected from the writings of Aristotle, but which are justly considered by Fabricius as not genuine.

CHAP. XVIII.

Demosthenes.

DEMOSTHENES seems to have been born about 380 or 384 years before Christ, though some say at an earlier period; he was a citizen of Athens, of moderate condition. Being excited to a love of eloquence, though labouring under many constitutional impediments, he arrived by his exertions at such eminence as to be considered by Cicero a perfect orator, and to have left a name, the mention of which raises in our minds the idea of all that is consummate in the rhetorical art*.

Having in early life betrayed a want of courage in military services, he devoted himself to civil pursuits, and was enabled by his power of speaking to establish much ascendancy at Athens, and to direct the views of

* Valer. Maxim. lib. viii. c. 7. p. 681. lib. viii. c. 10. p. 703.

his citizens to great and vigorous exertion against their enemies. He displayed in particular all the powers of his mind in resisting the endeavours of Philip and Antipater to oppress the liberties of Greece. He was accused of not having been proof against the corruption of the gold of Harpalus; but if we contemplate the general integrity of his character, and the readiness of the Athenians to calumniate the great men who directed their affairs, we may be disposed to assent to those who deny the charge*. He was opposed by other orators, particularly by Æschines, who declaimed against Ctesiphon for voting a golden crown to Demosthenes. Plutarch informs us, that it was remarked that Athens was preserved by the discord of its orators, ten of whom were eminent; for, as they rested on different grounds, security resulted from the emulation and mutual jealousy, which prevailed among those, who administered to the public service†. Demosthenes, apprehensive of being given up by his countrymen to appease Antipater, took poison at Calauria; and said to Archias,

* Pausanias in Corinthiacâ, p. 190. Edit. Lip. 1696.

† De Audiend. Poet.

an emissary of Antipater, “ you may perform the part of Creon, and cast out this carcass unburied.” Plutarch represents Archias as reporting to Antipater, that Demosthenes had professed to have recourse to suicide under the impression as much that he might be corrupted from his principles by the kindness of Antipater, as that he might be destroyed by his resentment. It is melancholy to contemplate the fate of the distinguished men of antiquity, who so often terminated their lives by suicide, demonstrating how insufficient their principles were for the endurance of adversity. Pausanias remarks, that it was well observed upon occasion of the death of Demosthenes, that he had too much love for his country,—that a man who devotes himself unsparingly to a republic, and confides in popular favour, will never terminate his life happily*.

Demosthenes was attached to the Platonic philosophy, and Cicero leads us to believe that he was a hearer of Plato himself. Dionysius of Halicarnassus wrote an epistle to Ammæus†, which is still extant, to prove

* Attic. lib. i. c. 8. p. 20.

† Plutarch Tzetzes Chil. vi. v. 170. 186.

that Demosthenes did not borrow his rhetorical knowledge from Aristotle, or conform to his precepts*.

There is little in the remaining productions of Demosthenes, which illustrates the evidence of revelation, or which enables us to trace the extension of its principles. They exhibit, indeed, but few passages, which afford any detail of his opinions on subjects of religious interest; he affirms that there were some common principles of moral feeling, upon which all men were agreed. "Hath an injury," says he, "been committed, it is followed by resentment and punishment; hath a man erred unwillingly, he meets with pardon instead of punishment; is there a man, who hath neither willingly or inadvertently offended, who hath devoted himself to what appeared the true interests of his country, but in some instances hath shared in the general disappointment, justice requires that instead of reproaching and reviling such a man, we should condole with him†; these points are all manifest, they need

* H. Stephen. 1554. and Demosthenes a Wolfii.

† De Corona.

“ not the decision of laws, they are determined by nature, by the unwritten precepts of humanity.”

With respect to his devotion he invokes all the deities of heaven, all the divine guardians of his country, particularly the Pythian Apollo, the tutelary god of Athens *. This indeed might imply no more than a conformity to popular opinions and forms of speech: in like manner as when in a passage which has been greatly admired as among the highest flights of his eloquence, he swears by the shades of those who were slain at Marathon and Salamis; and we find him elsewhere apparently intimating his reverence for the Supreme Being, when he declares that the final issue of all things depends upon God. The account which he gives of the Athenians, is strikingly calculated to correct that extravagant admiration, which, in the contemplation of this interesting republic, forgets all the moral principles upon which communities should be established, and the obligations by which they are all reciprocally bounden as by the common laws of nations.

* Demosth. Orat. 19. De Corona, and Leland's translation, vol. ii. p. 394.

We may applaud the exertions, the bravery, and the patriotism of the people, as maintaining the independence and liberties of Greece against foreign invaders; and we may behold with enthusiasm the works of art and the productions of genius, which the Athenians have bequeathed to us, but it is evident that the spirit, which Demosthenes describes in the following passage as predominant among them, was calculated to involve them in eternal warfare, and violation of justice towards others. He states with exultation and praise, that “ their whole
 “ history was a series of noble contests for
 “ pre-eminence, the whole period of their
 “ existence having been spent in braving
 “ dangers for the sake of glory and renown;
 “ and so highly,” says the orator, “ do you
 “ esteem such conduct, so consonant to the
 “ Athenian character, that those of your an-
 “ cestors, who were most distinguished in the
 “ pursuit of it, are ever the most favourite
 “ objects of your praise*.”

The well known passage in the first Philippic, in which he represents the Athenians as loitering about the public places, enquiring

* De Corona. Leland's translation.

of each other what new advices, “ is Philip
 “ dead?” or as listening to every rumour;
 (and which passage is brought forward to
 particular notice, by the commendation of
 Longinus,) reminds us of the account in the
 Acts of the Apostles*, which states that
 “ all the Athenians and strangers which
 “ were in their city, spent their time in
 “ nothing else but to tell or to hear of some
 “ new thing.”

The orator urges his argument to excite
 them to vigilance and exertion, while St. Paul
 with nobler views endeavours to diminish
 their solicitude for earthly concerns by reli-
 gious considerations. Demosthenes states,
 indeed, that they were more indebted to for-
 tune than to their own conduct for the pre-
 servation of the city; a sentiment, which,
 delivered by a Heathen, was sufficiently con-
 sistent with the declaration of St. Paul, that
 “ God hath made of one blood all nations
 “ of men for to dwell on all the face of the
 “ earth, and hath determined the times be-
 “ fore appointed, and the bounds of their
 “ habitation †.”

* Acts xvii. 21. See also Athenæus.

† Acts xvii. 21—26.

The orations of Demosthenes derive much of their importance from the decisive manner, in which he exposes the errors of the Athenians in adopting a timid and irresolute policy, regulated by the proceedings of their enemies, and not framed upon any concerted and general plan; he points out the measures, which their interest required, in plain and perspicuous language. As works of genius they by no means develope those extraordinary resources, or that variety of illustration which appears in the speeches of distinguished orators of modern times; he addressed indeed an assembly very differently constituted from that of an enlightened senate; he harangued a wavering and capricious people, easily agitated, sometimes presumptuous, and sometimes supine; he raised them in their dejection by encouragements, and he exposed the delusion of their false confidence when insensible of their danger. The influence which he possessed over the minds of the Athenians was so great, that as Lucian expresses himself, he excited them when they seemed like men stupified by mandragora; and the power of his eloquence, which had secured Eubœa, Megara, Bœotia, and the shores of the Hel-

lespont, and had baffled and dissipated the schemes of the sovereigns who endeavoured to subvert the welfare of his country, was more feared by Philip and Antipater, than the fleets and armies of the Athenians. If any thing could have restored the spirit of the Grecian Republics which was decayed, it would have been revived by the animation which he inspired, and by the intrepid resolution which he sometimes kindled. Those who would imitate his eloquence, should imbibe that patriotism and generous ardour for freedom which it breathes, or they will derive as little profit from his speeches as did Nonnus, of whom it is related, that after having read them six times with a view to acquire eloquence, he was unable to utter a word in public.

CHAP. XIX.

Theocritus.

THEOCRITUS, the son of Praxagoras, was born at Syracuse, he appears to have quitted that city, and to have placed himself under the protection of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who began to reign 284 years before Christ, and who collected at his court men of distinguished talents from various countries, affording a greater patronage to literature than did Hiero*, the second of that name, whose history is related by Polybius; under whose power however Theocritus afterwards came, and by whom it has been said, though without sufficient authority, that he was put to death.

Theocritus celebrates Ptolemy in his 14th and 17th Idyls, and Berenice and Arsinoe in his 15th.

* Idyl. 16, 17.

It is probable that the poet, during his abode in Egypt, became acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, which were translated in the reign of Ptolemy into Greek, since we find him employing the same figures and similitudes as are used by the sacred writers, and particularly transferring imagery into his works borrowed from the Canticles of Solomon, to which as a pastoral allegory, his attention in composing Idyls might naturally be directed*.

The instances of this are so numerous, that they can scarcely be considered as casual.

Some Bucolics, written probably by other poets, became mixed by Artemidorus and other collectors with those of Theocritus, which H. Stephens, Ursinus and others endeavoured to separate. Fabricius still doubts whether the 20th Idyl, was not written by Moschus; and some Idyls ascribed to Moschus, belong to Theocritus.

* Compare Cant. i. 9. with Idyl. xviii. l. 30. Cant. vi. 10. with Idyl. xviii. l. 26. Cant. iv. 11. with Idyl. xx. l. 26, 27. Cant. iv. 15. with Idyl. i. l. 7, 8. Cant. ii. 15. with Idyl. i. l. 48, 49. Cant. i. 7. with Idyl. ii. l. 69. Cant. v. 2. with Idyl. ii. l. 127. Cant. viii. 6, 7. with Idyl. ii. l. 133, 134. Cant. ii. 8, 9. with Idyl. viii. l. 88, 89. Cant. viii. 7. with Idyl. xxiii. l. 23, 26.

CHAP. XX.

Moschus.

MOSCHUS was a pastoral poet, who lived in the time of Theocritus, or according to Suidas somewhat later, since he was a disciple of Aristarchus who flourished in the reign of Ptolemy Philometor, before Christ 180. Some of his productions appear to have contributed to encrease the reputation of Theocritus, to whom they were erroneously ascribed. There is a passage in the Epitaph on Bion, written by Moschus, but attributed by Ursinus to Theocritus, (who is by some indeed called Moschus,) and published by Aldus; the lines may be thus rendered :

Alas ! alas ! when flowers or shrubs decay,
 Again they live, and spread their leaves to-day ;
 But man however great, or strong, or wise,
 When once he falls, in earth neglected lies :
 No more excited by the poet's strains,
 But lost in silent sleep he still remains *.

* Επὶ ταφῆς Βίωνος. L. 104.

Compare these with the following passage in Job.

“ For there is hope of a tree if it be cut
 “ down that it will sprout again, and that
 “ the tender branch thereof will not cease.
 “ Though the root thereof wax old in the
 “ earth, and the stock thereof die in the
 “ ground, yet through the scent of water it
 “ will bud and bring forth boughs like a
 “ plant, but man dieth and wasteth away,
 “ yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where
 “ is he * ?”

The Heathen poet seems to have considered death as an interminable sleep, though the very circumstance of the renewal of life to plants, might from analogy have excited a better hope. If Job in the passage produced speaks somewhat ambiguously, he afterwards professes his belief in a resurrection †. There are some fragments of Moschus published by Stephens and Ursinus.

* Job xiv. 7. 10.

† Ibid. xix. 25. 27.

CHAP. XXI.

Lycophron.

LYCOPHRON was the son of Soclis *, and adopted by Lycus an historian, from whom probably he derived his name. This writer, who was contemporary with Callimachus, is said to have been born at Chalcis (now Nigropontus) in Eubœa. He appears to have repaired to the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and to have been one of the seven poets who flourished under his patronage †.

* Tzetzes, Chil. viii. Hist. 204.

† He seems to have flattered the monarch by contriving Anagrams on his name and that of his queen, in which Πτολεμαῖος (Ptolemy) is represented as a transposition, ἀπὸ μέλιτος (from honey), and Ἀρσινόη, a change upon Ἰον ἥρας, the violet of Juno; devices customary in every age, and which might be adduced to shew that the poet could descend to the playful relaxations of life, but which scarcely authorize the conclusion which some writers have drawn from them, that Lycophron was acquainted with the Hebrew, and learnt from the Jews the method of composing them. Vid. Fabric. in Lycophron, lib. iii. c. 16. 417. Crenii fascicul. Dissert. His. Crit. c. 1.

The poem which is extant, entitled *Cassandra*, is a very remarkable work. It is a collection of pretended prophecies, and there is something in the form and general character of these predictions which might be thought to indicate an acquaintance with the Hebrew writings.

Cassandra is related to have been the daughter of Priam and Hecuba, who obtained by artifice from Apollo the gift of prophecy as the condition of her affection; having broken her engagement to the god, he was provoked to appoint that all her predictions should be disbelieved. After the destruction of Troy she was married to Agamemnon, and went with him on his return to Greece.

This work is a kind of Monologue, composed in Iambic verse of many detached prophecies, slightly connected in subject and supposed to have been uttered by Cassandra, and reported by a messenger to Priam.

The prophetess beholding Paris about to sail on his fatal voyage to Greece, predicts the miseries which the inconsiderate prince would bring upon himself, his family, and his country; she foretells his fall, and that of his royal house; she foreshews the fu-

ture fate of the Grecians on their return, and the calamities which awaited their several chiefs; particularly pointing out what the Grecians would suffer from the madness of Ajax; and describing the circumstances which Diomed, Ulysses, and Menelaus, would encounter in their voyages, and those which Agamemnon and Idomeneus would experience on their return. Cassandra then in the desultory manner of prophecy, goes back to the former causes of war between Asia and Europe, alluding to events from the rapes of Io and Europa, and referring to the history of the Argonauts and Amazons. She concludes with a view of the Trojan History and of the reigns of Midas and Xerxes down to the time of Alexander; when conscious of the rumours scattered by Apollo to destroy all faith in her predictions, she ceases to utter them.

Many other fabulous and historical particulars are inserted in episodes, as the labours of Hercules, the flood of Deucalion, the battle of Castor and Pollux, the wanderings of Æneas, the settlement in Italy, and other events, embracing no inconsiderable part of the fables of antiquity. The design of the author has been described as framed

with a view to the instruction of youth in the history of heroic times, from Hercules to Alexander.

It is probable that the work of Lycophron was first suggested by, if not projected in imitation of the prophetic odes of Scripture, brought into particular notice by the translation of the Septuagint made by order of Ptolemy, at the time that Lycophron and the other poets which have been mentioned, were assembled at his court. There are many proofs that the Sacred Writings attracted much attention, and Theocritus and others certainly borrowed from the same model; Lycophron might have caught from them the general idea of composing a prophetic work, which being thrown back to an imaginary period might seem to anticipate the events which history afterwards recorded. It may be thought strange, however, if this supposition should be admitted, that Lycophron should have borrowed so little from the Scriptures, but it is to be observed, that the subjects in contemplation were so very different as not to lead naturally to any correspondence, and that the very celebrity given to the Sacred Writings by the translation, might render the poets of the time cautious in

borrowing, what must have immediately betrayed its origin.

The author in speaking of Hercules, whom he calls the three-knighted lion, represents him to have been swallowed by the triton dog of Neptune, called Charcharias, and to have escaped little injured, eating through the belly of the animal. Tzetzes, a Scholiast upon Lycophron, considers this account as relating to the fish in which Hercules was said to have remained three days, and Æneas Gazæus refers to this story, which manifestly alludes to parallel circumstances in the history of Jonah*.

The work is by no means devoid of interest: and though encumbered with wild and confused fables, it contains some descriptions which are striking. The compound epithets used by this writer to a much greater extent than they are employed by Homer, might be formed from an endeavour to attain that expressive and comprehensive power which prophecy particularly requires, and which the Hebrew language by its peculiar force and latitude possessed; the style is in-

* Theophylact. See Cyril. com. in Jonam.

deed very singular, and the obscurity by which it is peculiarly distinguished, seems to favour the mysterious import of the prophecies. Some writers who have noticed the feeble light which is indistinctly discerned in the poem, have compared its author to the faint and nebulous star in the Pleiades; there is, however, occasionally much beauty in the variegated shades of the language*.

Some fragments of Lycophron's verses are preserved in Athenæus and Laertius†, and the former writer mentions some books composed by him on the subject of comedy. Lycophron is also reported to have been a grammarian, to have commented on Aristophanes and other comic writers, and to have himself composed many dramatic pieces; the names of twenty of which are enumerated by Suidas. He is related to have fallen a victim to the jealousy of a competitor with whom he had contested for fame, and who

* Vignerius speaking of the enigmatical style of Lycophron, relates that a person being indignant at the obscurity of the poem, cut a copy of it into two pieces, "pour voir ce qu'il y avoit au dedans, puisqu'on n'y pouvoit rien discerner par le dehors, Vigner in Lib. de Zifris. p. 13. Colomes. Opuscul. p. 241. et seq."

† Canter. in Lycophron.

pierced him with an arrow, a circumstance which some suppose to be referred to by Ovid *.

Stobæus has given a pleasing fragment from the Pelops of Lycophron, of which Grotius has furnished us with the following version. It contains a thought which Æsop has worked into a fable.

Mortem remotam poscit ardenti prece
 Quemcunque durâ clade fortuna opprimit,
 At cum supremus volvitur fluctus, redit
 Vitæ cupido, non enim satias tenet †.

Horace seems to have caught from the poem of Lycophron, the idea of the animated ode in which he represents Nereus to have kept back with painful delay, the ship in which Paris was returning with Helen in their guilty flight to Troy, in order that he might denounce the evils which overshadowed his inauspicious course, and the calamities which should result from his crime to his family and country, and foretel the combination of the Grecian powers which should conspire to overturn his nuptials and the empire of Troy.

* In Ibin. L. 531.

† Vid. Fabric. on Lycophron. lib. iii. c. 16. p. 423.

The Rev. Mr. Mean published a few years since, some remarks on the Cassandra, and some specimens of a translation which he does not appear to have completed, but which if executed in the spirit of the sketch which he published, would be deserving of the attention of the public*.

The late lamented Lord Royston, whose talents would have rendered him an ornament to literature and to his country, published a complete translation of Lycophron, executed by himself in a very superior manner, so as to illustrate many of the obscurities inherent in the text of that author.

* See British Critic for August, 1801.

CHAP. XXII.

Callimachus.

CALLIMACHUS is reported by Strabo to have been a native of Cyrene in Africa, he was descended it is supposed from Battus, the king and founder of Cyrene, and flourished in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Callimachus was esteemed one of the most eminent of the seven poets, who composed a constellation of men of genius at Alexandria, and who were called the Pleiades. He was also a grammarian, and established a school in which Apollonius Rhodius was his disciple. He was appointed president of the celebrated library at Alexandria*, and continued in that office under Ptolemy Philadelphus and his successor Euergetes who began to reign 246 years, before Christ.

* Fabricius.

Berenice the Queen of Euergetes was distinguished for her conjugal affection, which led her to make a vow to consecrate her hair, if her husband should return safe from his expedition into Syria. She accomplished her promise on the desired event, by offering her tresses at a temple which had been built by Ptolemy Philadelphus, at Zephyrium, a promontory in Cyprus, in honour of Arsinoe, under the name of the Zephyrian Venus. The hair being lost, the astronomer Conon immortalized the story, by affirming that the seven stars in the tail of the lion which had not previously been reckoned in any constellation, were formed from the locks placed in the heavens, and Callimachus composed an elegy upon the occasion, now extant only in the translation of Catullus.

Of the other poetical productions of Callimachus which were numerous, a few hymns only, and epigrams remain. He appears to have composed a history of Sacred Rites, of which Cælius Rhodiginus laments the loss, and which probably would have been a work of great interest if it had been preserved.

Callimachus having lived in the period at which the Septuagint version of the Scriptures was made, and being led by his office

of librarian to attend to it, had peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted with the inspired writings, but though in his elegant hymns there are some vestiges of sacred truth, there is but a slight presumption of his having borrowed from them.

He speaks of the builders of Babel as being the descendants of Noah after the flood, and as the persons who peopled the earth, remarking that

The sons of Cronus ascertained by lot
Their several realms on earth*.

It may be observed, that there is a passage in Homer in which Neptune states, that the three sons of Saturn divided all things between them†. Bryant conceives this to have reference to the same account, though the three Gods took the Heavens, the Sea, and Tartarus among them, and Neptune's statement is, that the Earth and Olympus were left in common; some in the same passage have discovered an allusion to a Trinity.

The address and Prosopopœia in the Psalm xxiv. 7. resembles a passage in the first Hymn to Apollo.

* *Υμνος εις τον Δια*, l. 61.

† *Iliad*, l. v. 187. 190—3. Bryant's *Mythol.* vol. iii. p. 15.

“ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be
 “ ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the
 “ King of Glory shall come in.” The imagery in Callimachus, though probably borrowed from this, is far inferior, “ fall back ye
 “ bars of the gates, recoil ye bolts, for the
 “ God is now not far distant *.”

In a passage in the hymn to Jove, Callimachus styles the god *πηλογόνων ἐλατῆρα*, him who drives out the earth-born, or those formed of the earth, which it is thought might allude to the first formation of man from the earth †, or to the story of the giants who rebelled against Jove. He also styles man, Promethean clay.

Callimachus reports, that love was the cause of Apollo's banishment, and some says Stillingfleet, have conjectured that the memory of Jacob's peregrination and service with Laban is preserved under the story ‡.

An Epigram, left by this writer, shews that the poets, who lived under the patronage of Ptolemy, could exert their talents on a moral

* *Αυτοὶ νυν κατοχῆς ἀνακλίνεσθε πύλαων,*

Αὐταὶ δὲ κλῆιδες, ἢ γὰρ θεὸς ἐκεῖ μακρὰν. L. 6. 7.

See also Isaiah vi. 4, and Spanheim observat. in Locum.

† Nicolaus Frischlinus. annot. in Callim. Hymn, lib. i. 1. 72. Edit. Stephan.

‡ *Ὕμνος εἰς τὸν Ἀπολ.*

theme ; it affords an ample illustration of the uncertainty of human life *. The lines which are on Charmis, are to this effect :

“ Who knows what fate to-morrow may unfold ?
But yesterday mine eyes did thee behold :
To-day, we weeping give thee to the earth,
And a sad parent mourns thy buried worth.”

Callimachus wrote some pieces in prose which were not long, as he was accustomed to say, that a great book was a great evil †.

It is in the hymn to Jove that Callimachus describes the Cretans as always false, in a passage which some suppose to be referred to by St. Paul ‡. St. Jerome, however, states that the Apostle here quotes from Epimenides, whom Plato styles ἀνὴρ θεῖος.

* Epigram. Edit. Henry Stephens, p. 6, 7. Δαίμονα δὲ τις
εὖ οἶδε. Vid. Horat.

† Athenæus, Init. l. iii.

‡ Κεῖντις ἀεὶ ψεύσται. Titus i. 12.

CHAP. XXIII

Cleanthes.

CLEANTHES was born at Assos in Lydia, about 339 years before Christ. Though he was compelled by hard circumstances to support himself by labour, he established such reputation among the stoics, as to succeed Zeno in the direction of their school, and to be honoured by a statue, which was erected to his memory by the Romans.

Cleanthes is said to have written a book on the art of rhetoric*. None of his productions, however, have been transmitted to us but his celebrated Hymn, and a few fragments. From what we collect of his opinions from these remains, and from what is stated by Cicero, Clement of Alexandria, and others, he appears to have maintained, and to have eloquently recommended, some ori-

* Cicero de Fin. lib. iv. § 3. Tom. 2. p. 170. Edit. Olivet.

ginal principles of truth, from whatever sources collected, and to have expressed sentiments of piety and virtue with much effect.

Clement of Alexandria states, that his works exhibit not a poetical theogony, but a genuine theology*; and he presents us with a few lines of the poet, in which, in describing what is perfectly good, he enumerates perfections applicable only to the Deity.

Cleanthes appears to regard the world itself as well as the intelligent power by which it is directed, as God, ascribing a divinity to nature, or to reason presiding over the works of nature. He sometimes, however, as if raving, says Cicero, “feigns some form and figure of God, and attributes a Divine nature to the heavenly bodies†.” He is represented also by Cicero, to have maintained that the notions of the existence of gods were formed in the minds of men by four causes, the first of which arises from the prescience of future events; the second from the consideration of the greatness of the benefits which we experience in the temperature of the atmosphere, the fruitfulness of the earth, and from many other

* Cohort. ad Gent. § 47. p. 61. Edit. Potter.

† De Natur. Deorum, lib. i. § 14.

appointments conducive to our advantage ; the third, the terror which arises from thunder, storms, showers, snow, hail, desolation, pestilence, earthquakes, and threatening clouds, (*fremitibus*) and from showers of stones, and as it were bloody drops of rain, and from sudden openings of the earth ; as further from præternatural portents of men, and cattle ; from the sight of celestial lights, as from those stars which the Greeks call comets, and we (*i. e.* the Romans) bearded, (*cincinnatas*) which in the Octavian war were the forerunners of great calamities ; and further, from a double sun, which appeared, says Cicero, as I have heard from my father, in the consulship of Tuditanus and Aquilius, in which year Publius Africanus (one of the suns) died, by which things men being frightened, are led to suppose, that there is some celestial and Divine power. The fourth and last cause, which is the greatest, results from a consideration of the equability of the movements, and the revolutions, of the heavens ; the distinction, utility, beauty and order of the sun, moon, and all the stars, the very sight of which things sufficiently indicate that they are not made by chance ; for (says Cicero, continuing it should seem the sentiments of Cleanthes) “if any one shall

“ come into a house, into a school, or the
 “ Forum, when he shall see the distribution
 “ of all things, and the method and regu-
 “ larity with which they are disposed, he
 “ cannot conceive that these things have
 “ taken place without a cause, but must un-
 “ derstand that there is some one who pre-
 “ sides, and is obeyed ; much more in such
 “ great movements, and in such considerable
 “ revolutions ; in the ordering of so many
 “ and so important concerns, which from all
 “ their immense antiquity have never be-
 “ trayed any falsehood or deviation, must
 “ he determine that they are governed by
 “ some mind *.”

In another place, Cicero informs us, that
 Cleanthes was accustomed to excite his dis-
 ciples to virtue, by directing them to frame
 in their minds a picture of Pleasure, seated
 in a beautiful dress, and with regal orna-
 ments, on a throne, attended by the Virtues
 as handmaids, who should do nothing else,
 and esteem nothing else to be their duty,
 but to administer to Pleasure, and to admo-
 nish her not to do any thing inconsiderately,

* De Nat. Deorum, lib. ii. § 5. Tom. 2. p. 439.

or which might offend the minds of men, or any thing from which grief might arise*.

This pleasing allegory, expressive of an amiable turn of mind, might lead us to wish that more of the writings of Cleanthes had been preserved to us: what, however, is most interesting, is a very beautiful Hymn, which happily remains †, and which affords a very striking proof of the piety and just apprehensions of the poet with respect to the Divine nature, though he knew not the true God. Some doubts have been entertained as to the authenticity of this Hymn, but in general it seems to be regarded as genuine. It is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius and quoted by Eusebius.

Cleanthes ascribes supremacy to Jove, and addresses him as the omnipotent author of nature, governing the universe by law, and being the common father of mankind. There are some passages in the Hymn which are particularly striking, and which might seem to have been framed with some apprehension of the instruction which was originally imparted by revelation. He describes Jove as giving

* De Fin. lib. ii. § 21. p. 225.

† Brunck. Gnomici. Poet. Græc. p. 141.

ornament to that which is unseemly, and a friendly aspect to that which is not acceptable*; and as mingling good and evil together, so as to produce an harmonious whole. He speaks of men, though represented as “a race from God,” and created in his image, as hurried by their passions to evil, and he concludes with a prayer to the Deity, intreating him to dispel the illusions which mislead mankind, that they may render unto him due honours, and sing his praise, for that no greater privilege can be conferred on mortals, than to be allowed to celebrate a common law.

The Hymn may possibly have suggested to Pope his Universal Prayer, in which he has been by some supposed to relapse into the general notions of natural religion, and to forget the peculiar claims of revelation. The Heathen poet deduces the attributes of God from the manifestation of his power and wisdom, in the visible scene of the world, which never ceased to bear witness to the Almighty. He ascended from Nature to Nature's God, and he seems to have rejected

* Καὶ κοσμεῖς τὰ ἄκοσμα, καὶ ὃ φίλα, σοὶ φίλα, ἴσθιν.

much of the superstition of his time. They who have received the evidence of Divine instruction given by the word of God, must be unworthy of the blessing, if they do not highly value its communications. The Hymn of Cleanthes was published by Ursinus in 1568, by H. Stephens in 1753, and since by Brunck. Translations of it have been made into Latin, French, Italian, and English, by Jacob Duport, Monsieur de Bougainville, Girolamo Pompei, and West, which are well deserving of perusal. Strabo mentions a picture of Cleanthes which described the taking of Troy and the birth of Minerva *.

* Lib. viii. c. 3. p. 518.

CHAP. XXIV.

Aratus.

ARATUS is said to have been a native of Soli, or Sole, a town of Cilicia, founded by Solon, afterwards called Pompeiopolis ; some, however, represent him to have been of Tarsus, which may be explained, if we receive the testimony of Josephus, that Cilicia was formerly called Tarsus*.

He was appointed physician to Antigonus Gonatas, King of Macedonia, who began to reign 278 years before Christ. He experienced also the favour of Ptolemy Philadelphus, in whose court probably he enjoyed the friendship of Theocritus, who is said to have addressed his sixth Idyl to him, to have reflected upon his attachments in his seventh, and to have borrowed

* Antiq. l.i. c. 7. et Andreas Schmidius Dissert. de Arat. Jenæ. 1685.

from him the pious beginning of his seventeenth*.

The *Phænomena* of Aratus, a poetical work, of which some fragments are still extant, was published by Grotius at Leyden in 1600, and since that time by Stephens, and also at Oxford. It is partly astronomical, and partly astrological. The author, who does not appear to have been profoundly acquainted with his subject, obtained some information upon it from Eudoxus. It was translated into Latin by Cicero, by Claudius, and by Germanicus Cæsar, and commented on by Aristarchus and others†. Virgil is said to have imitated many passages of the poem in his *Georgics*. Eusebius cites a passage from Aratus in which he speaks of Jove, or the Divine power, pervading every thing, and from whom we derive our generation‡.

Clement of Alexandria supposes St. Paul to quote from Aratus, when he remarks that some of the poets had said, “we are his offspring §,” thus sanctifying words which are

* Confer. Scholiast. Theoc. ad Idyl. vii. 98, 99. 101.

† Vide Fabric. in Arat. Cicer. de Nat. Deor. l. 2. c. 41.

‡ Præp. Evan. l. 13. c. 12. p. 666.

§ Acts xvii. 28.

to be found in the fifth line of the Phænomena. Others, however, maintain that the Apostle refers to the 4th verse in the hymn of Cleanthes, (who taught at Athens) which was addressed to Jupiter, and published by Ursinus and by Henry Stephens, in which we read the words, “ we are a race
“ from thee *.

In his Phænomena Aratus represents all things as full of Jove, and he describes God as the great wonder, and the stars as signs which God had fixed in the heavens, and distinguished by their names †.

* *Εκ σου γὰρ γένος ἐσμεν.* In the golden verses of Pythagoras there are these words: *Θεῖον γένος ἐστὶ βροτοῖσι.*

† *Αὐτὸς γὰρ τάδε σήματα ἐν ἑρανῷ ἐστήριξεν,
Ἀστέρα διακρίνας.*

Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. cap. 255. p. 709.

CHAP. XXV.

Polybius.

POLYBIUS was born at Megalopolis in Arcadia, about 205 years before Christ, being the son of Lycortas, who relinquished a sovereign command at Megalopolis, in order to obtain distinction in the Achean republic, at a time when it possessed the chief power among the Grecian states*.

Polybius appears to have accompanied his father on an embassy to Ptolemy Epiphanes, and during the time that the Romans made war on Perseus he was sent to Rome, where he contracted friendship with Scipio Africanus and Lelius, attending the former into Africa. He was said to have been present at the destruction of Carthage and of Corinth†; he afterward witnessed the subjugation of Greece, and was employed in

* Plutarch in Philopæmen. Justin 32. 1—7.

† Strabo, lib. viii. p. 552. and Appian Libyc., p. 82.

settling its government, manifesting a patriotic regard to his country without offending the Romans.

The history of Polybius consisted originally of forty books; of these five only have escaped from the ravage of time; and an epitome of twelve others, supposed to have been made by Marcus Brutus. The work extended from the beginning of the second Punic war to the fall of the Macedonian monarchy, treating of the Achæan league, the Macedonian, Syrian, Egyptian, Cappadocian, and Persian empires; it is written with simplicity and with great regard to truth*, and moral instruction. The author appears to have believed in the superintendence of the Deity†; but he sometimes ascribes to fortune that influence which belongs to Providence, particularly when he considers it as having that power of renovation, which in the Book of Revelation is justly attributed to God: “Behold, I make all things new‡.” There are some remarks, indeed, which have

* Pausan. in Arcad.

† Casaubon Dedicat. in Polyb. p. 41. et Xiphil. in August. p. 41.

‡ P. 3. et p. 377. Raphelius, et Wolfius in Rev. xxi. 5.

been thought to militate against the religious character of the author, particularly where he speaks with apparent incredulity respecting the rewards and punishments of a future life. He seems to have regard to religion only with reference to political views; and he states that superstition was deemed virtue at Rome, as it appears indeed to have been in the minds of Cicero, and other great men, who encouraged it for purposes of state policy *.

Polybius deserves the attention of the Christian student, as his work abounds with expressions similar to those which are employed by the evangelical writers †, and particularly in some unusual modes of speech, the use of which will serve to demonstrate, that the sacred writers are not always to be regarded as employing provincial phrases when they are supposed so to do; and if we consider the importance of their subjects, we may say, as did Cicero, when speaking of human productions, that if philosophy “of-
“ fered eloquence he would not reject it, but

* Cicero, lib. v. Epistle 12.

† Vide Annot. Philolog. in Nov. Test. ex Polyb. et Arriano. See also Georgius Raphelius, et Alex. Morum ad Galat. xi. 13.

“ that if it had not, he should not eagerly
 “ call for it*.”

We learn from Polybius, that it was customary among the Romans to inflict stripes before they executed condemned persons, which account explains the conduct of Pilate in scourging Jesus before he delivered him to be crucified †.

Josephus has preserved an extract from the sixteenth book of Polybius, which is not extant in the fragment of it which now remains. In it the historian is represented to have observed, in speaking of the temple of Jerusalem, that he had many things to say of it and particularly concerning the presence, or (τὴν ἐπιφανείαν) manifestation of God in it, but that he forebore the relation of it to another opportunity ‡.

Polybius wrote three books of the life and actions of Philopæmen, a work on tactics, and a short historical tract. Strabo speaks of Polybius as among those writers of geography who were Philosophers §. He is said to have been so anxious for correctness as to

* Philosophia si afferat eloquentiam non asperner; si non habeat, non admodum flagitem. De Finibus, lib. i.

† Matt. xxvii. 26.

‡ Joseph. lib. xii. c. 3. p.251.

Strabo, p. 1.

have visited the countries of which he had occasion to speak, and in particular to have crossed the Alps, that he might describe the march of Hannibal with graphical accuracy ; he professes to have found a brazen tablet, inscribed by Hannibal when he was in Italy, of which Polybius availed himself in writing his history.

CHAP. XXVI.

Diodorus Siculus.

THIS historian is said to have been born at Argyrium or Agyrium, in Sicily *, though he is called a Syracusan by Pliny. He lived in the time of Julius Cæsar and Augustus beyond the period in which the Calendar underwent a second reformation, which took place A. U. 746, when a regulation was enforced for the insertion of an intercalary day, on the 24th of February every fourth year.

Having travelled over a great part of Asia and other countries with a view to collect accurate information, he settled at Rome, and composed his *Bibliotheca Historica*, a diffusive and elaborate work, which contained a great mass of history, embracing a period from the reign of Ogyges, King of Bæotia,

* Scaliger in Euseb. Chron. ad Ann. 1967.

to the time of the historian. Only fifteen of his forty books, with some fragments collected from Photius, are now extant; the loss of those parts, which related to the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Phœnician histories, is particularly to be regretted. Henry Stephens had heard a report that all the works of Diodorus were extant in Sicily: and Lascaris professed to have seen a complete copy of his history in the Imperial Library at Constantinople. There is great reason to doubt whether any remains of this library now exist. Professor Carlyle, who made it the object of his particular enquiry, could not obtain any information concerning it, though he had the advantage of a confidential intercourse with the Patriarch.

Diodorus is a valuable historian, though far inferior to Herodotus and Thucydides, as to the spirit and interest of his work. The information which he affords, is furnished with a plain and unaffected simplicity. He appears to have been desirous of communicating truth; but commencing with the fabulous parts of ancient history, he could not but relate many traditionary fictions. It is probable, however, that he had not any intention of sanctioning some of those ac-

counts, which he gives of earlier nations, and indeed he expressly objects to the Chaldaean calculations. He seems, however, in many instances, to have listened with too easy credulity to the relations of travellers; as where he represents that the inhabitants of Ceylon had the tongue divided, and could converse perfectly with two men at the same time, speaking with one part of the tongue to one person, and with the other part to another. He writes under a just feeling of moral impressions, ascribes events to the interference of Providence, and states that evil is intermixed with good, with a view to discipline man to caution, modesty, and gratitude for the blessings which they enjoy. He speaks of the mythological notions which prevailed with respect to a future state in the manner which might be expected from a Heathen writer, who regarded them merely as useful fictions, conducive to piety and justice, but as less efficacious to form the manners than history, which he represents as alone conferring immortal celebrity to beings, who exist but for a short part of eternity*. His representations of the progress and excesses of idolatry, illus-

* Bibliotheca, lib. i. c. 2. p. 4, 5. Edit. Wetsten.

trating to what extent the heathens were given up to their vile affections, “being dead in sins,” remarkably confirm the description of St. Paul*.

Diodorus is particularly cited by Justin Martyr†, as substantiating the claims and history of Moses. Many testimonies to the truth of the Sacred Writings, illustrative of the completion of prophecy, may be gleaned from his works. He speaks of Moses as an ancient legislator, who professed to derive his precepts from Iao or Jehovah‡, and he gives an account of the creation of the world, gradually distributed into its constituent parts, and composed into order and arrangement, which seems to exhibit a mutilated account of particulars described by the sacred historian. He specifies the production of the sun and stars, and of animals and creeping things and fishes; and he speaks of the generation of living creatures after the earth had been settled under the influence of heat and the spirit (*πνευμάτων*) in a manner obscure indeed, but in which we

* Rom. i. 25—31. Ephes. ii. 2, 3.

† Λογος προς Ελληνας. p. 14. Edit. Par. 1742.

‡ Lib. i. c. 59. p. 105.

discover the evident traces of truth*. He appears also to refer to traditionary relations with respect to the deluge†.

Diodorus describes the fœtid and malignant nature of the exhalations of the Lake Asphaltites, which affected the bodies of men with diseases; and he states, that the inhabitants derived a profit from the bitumen, which they sold to the Egyptians, who used it for embalming the dead, as necessary to be mixed with the aromatics for the preservation of the bodies‡. He alludes to a traditionary account, preserved among the Ichthyophagi, who lived on the borders of the Red Sea, which has been thought to refer to its recess, when a miraculous passage was afforded to the Israelites§.

The account which he gives in some fragments of his work, with respect to the history of the Jews, exhibits a strange mixture of truth and falsehood, confirming the main facts, but tending to shew how hastily the reports of prejudice and misinformation

* Lib. i. p. 10, 11.

† Lib. i. c. 10. p. 14. lib. v. c. 47. p. 369.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. ii. c. 92. p. 100. lib. xix. c. 724, 725. p. 394, 395. vol. ii.

§ Vide lib. iii. c. 15. p. 184. and Patrick on Exodus xiv. 21.

were received against this people ; he represents them to have been “ driven out
 “ of Egypt on account of a leprosy which
 “ prevailed there, and which was attributed to the anger of the gods ; because by the abode of a promiscuous crowd
 “ of strangers among them using foreign
 “ rites, the ancient honours of the gods
 “ were subverted ; and hence an apprehension had arisen, that unless the strangers
 “ should be removed, great evils would
 “ ensue. That being in consequence expelled, some of the most distinguished
 “ and active men settled in Greece and
 “ other countries, under the command of
 “ Danaus and Cadmus, while the greater part
 “ took possession of Judea then a desert ;
 “ the colony being conducted by Moses, a
 “ man eminent for his wisdom and fortitude, who having taken possession of the
 “ country, he built as well other cities as
 “ that which is most conspicuous, and now
 “ called Jerusalem, and placed there the
 “ temple which they most venerate, instituting holy rites and laws of civil polity,
 “ and dividing the people into twelve tribes.”
 The Historian adds, “ that Moses did not

“ fabricate any image whatever, as not at-
 “ tributing any human form to God, but
 “ thinking that the heaven was God ; that
 “ he appointed sacrifices to distinguish his
 “ people from other nations ; for that from
 “ resentment for their expulsion, he intro-
 “ duced habits of life unsocial and hostile to
 “ strangers.”

Diodorus adds, “ that the men most qua-
 “ lified were selected as priests to officiate in
 “ the temple, to administer justice in great
 “ concerns, and to be entrusted with the
 “ custody of the laws, for that the sovereign
 “ power was vested in him, who was most
 “ distinguished for wisdom and virtue, and
 “ was called the High Priest, and whom
 “ they considered as the messenger of God
 “ to expound his ordinances to them, and
 “ that he was accustomed in their congrega-
 “ tions and counsels to bring forward
 “ the things that were commanded ; that
 “ so observant were the people upon these
 “ occasions, as immediately to fall prostrate
 “ to the ground in reverence of him who
 “ was the interpreter of the divine will.”

He states further, “ that it was added at the
 “ end of the laws that Moses, having heard

“ God, said these things to the Jews*.”
 He observes also, “ that the legislator displayed great foresight in directing military concerns, and in constraining the young men to exercise themselves in fortitude, manly endurance, and patience of adversity; that he conducted many expeditions into the neighbouring countries, and acquired great additions of territory, assigning the greater part of his acquisitions to the priests, that they receiving more ample revenues might more entirely devote themselves to the service of God. That it was not lawful for individuals to sell their lots †, lest any one by purchasing hereditary possessions should afflict the poor ‡, and reduce the numbers of the people.”
 Moreover, “ he directed the inhabitants carefully to bring up their children, who being supported at little expence, the Jewish nation became distinguished for its population.

* Οτι Μωσης ακουσας του Θεου, ταδε λεγει τοις Ιουδαιois, Diod. Sic. Eclogæ ex lib. xl. c. 922. p. 544. Edit. Wetsten.

† Κλήρος.

‡ See Levit. xxv. 23. 1 King● xxi.

Diodorus concludes with observing, that Moses particularly endeavoured that his laws with respect to marriage and the burial of the dead, should differ from those of other nations, and that by the changes which took place under the Persian and Macedonian empire from the intermixture with foreign people, many of the ancient institutes grew into disuse.

He elsewhere adopts an extravagant and calumnious account with respect to the temple of Jerusalem, stating that Antiochus upon entering it found the image of a man with a long beard carved in stone sitting upon an ass; and that the king having sacrificed a swine to the image of the founder on the altar of God, he poured out the blood on the holy books of the law, which he falsely represents as inculcating hatred to strangers*.

The historian incidentally mentions observances and customs prevailing amongst ancient nations, which may be thought to have originated in respect to the precepts of the Mosaic law; he remarks for instance, that the Indians did not cut down the trees

* Eclog. lib. xxxiv. p. 525.

of their enemies in war, and it is probable that this forbearance might have been exercised in conformity to the instruction in Deuteronomy (xx. 19.) made known to the Indians by oral communication. Diodorus informs us, that perjury among the Egyptians was punished with death *; and this custom might possibly have taken its rise from the operation of the principle of the Mosaic law, which directed the Israelites, that if “ a false witness rose up against any
 “ man to testify against him that which was
 “ wrong,” “ then should they do unto him
 “ as he had thought to have done unto his
 “ brother †.”

Diodorus affords many proofs of the completion of the Hebrew prophecies. He particularly mentions, that Sardanapalus was acquainted with an ancient prophecy, which declared that Nineveh should never be taken by force till the river should become the city's enemy ‡; and that when the Euphrates rose and destroyed part of the wall, he conceived that the prophecy was accomplished, and committed himself to the flames

* Lib. i. c. 49. p. 87.

† Deut. xix. 16. 19.

‡ Lib. ii. c. 80. p. 140.

on the pile, with his concubines and treasures, and the Medes and Persians took the city.

The historian represents Alexander to have designed to transplant the inhabitants of the cities of Asia into Europe, and reciprocally those of Europe into Asia*, a policy which might seem to have been grounded on that of Joseph.

He describe the Arabians, in consistency with the prophetic representations of their character, as at all times lovers of liberty, and addicted to rapine, stating that neither the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, or Macedonians were ever able to subdue them†.

His account of the taking of Tyre exhibits striking evidence of the unerring spirit of prophecy, since he particularly relates that Alexander demolished old Tyre, and with the stones carried away by many thousands of men, raised a mole two hundred feet in breadth‡, which circumstance remarkably verified the words of Ezekiel, “they shall lay thy stones and thy timber
“and thy dust in the midst of the water§.”

* Lib. xviii. c. 4. p. 260. vol. ii.

† Lib. ii. c. 64. p. 114. lib. ii. c. 92. p. 159. and Gen. xvi. 12.

‡ Lib. xvii. c. 40. p. 190.

§ Ezek. xxvi. 12.

It may deserve to be noticed, that the historian speaks of Semiramis having, when on her march to Medea, cut Syrian letters on the rock Bagistan, and he describes the method which he adopted in ascending and raising her works to the mountain; and this account tends to explain the memorable passage in the book of Job, in which he expresses his wish that his inspired words, expressive of faith in his Redeemer, were engraven in the rock *.

Eusebius gives extracts from Diodorus, which are not now to be found in his work, in which it is stated that the Egyptians esteemed some of their gods to have been originally immortal and incorruptible, as the sun, the heavenly bodies, the elements; and others to have derived a terrestrial existence from them, and afterwards to have been admitted into a state of immortality and glory, as Hercules, Bacchus, and others †.

Diodorus relates, that Alexander when reduced to his last breath, being enquired of by his friends to whom he would leave the kingdom, said, "To the best, for I foresee that

* Vide lib. ii. c. 13. p. 127.

† Præp. Evang. lib. i. c. 9. lib. iii. c. 3.

“ a great contest of my friends will take
 “ place, which will raise a monument to my
 “ memory *.” It is not impossible that
 Alexander, to whom according to some accounts which have been already produced, the prophecies of Daniel respecting him had been shewn †, might have reflected upon what had been foretold by the Prophet ; that after his horn should be broken, four (notable ones) should come up, and that his kingdom should be broken, and be divided toward the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled, for that his kingdom should be plucked up, even for others beside those ‡.

Fifty-five letters in Latin, under the name of Diodorus Siculus, were published by Carrera, at Catana, in 1639, and said to be translated by Cardinal Bessarion ; they are published also by Fabricius. The Greek originals, however, have never appeared, and there have been few advocates for their authenticity. They are generally regarded as fabrications of modern times.

* Lib. xviii. c. 1. p. 257.

† Joseph. lib ii. c. 8. vol. i. chap. 8. of this work.

‡ Dan. viii. 8. xi. 4—22. vii. 6. 8.

CHAP. XXVII.

Strabo.

STRABO drew his descent from Crete. He was born in Amasia, on the borders of Cappadocia, and lived in the time of Augustus and Tiberius. He was a scholar of Demetrius, and was brought up in the principles of Aristotle; but he seems to have seceded from the Peripatetic philosophy, and to have professed the principles of the Stoics.

Providence appears to have raised up men with peculiar talents, for the production of every work which might be conducive to the confirmation of the evidence of Christianity, and to have secured the preservation of their writings so far as was necessary for the instruction of subsequent ages in all points of importance.

Strabo was eminently qualified by his talents to prosecute and record observations, which might furnish complete information upon the distribution and state of the ancient world; and many particulars, connected with his descriptions, are of great consequence in explaining the history of our reli-

gion, and the writings which were subservient to its promulgation. He presents to us details of the institutes, manners, policy, and religion of the different countries which he visited, and particularly describes the territory of Judæa. Much of what he produces is remarkably accurate, as the result of his own observation. He travelled to Egypt, and to the extreme parts of Ethiopia, and visited Greece, Italy, and Sardinia; but not having been in Germany, his accounts of that country are less correct.

The statements of Strabo, with respect to the Jews and their country, bear testimony to the sacred accounts. Speaking of the western parts of Judæa, and of the district adjacent to the Lake, and of Galilee, Jericho and Samaria, he observes, that as they were inhabited by a mixed people, the prevailing reports concerning the Temple of Jerusalem obtained the more credit, and that they made it clear that the Egyptians were the ancestors of the Jews. He proceeds to relate, agreeably in some measure to these reports, that Moses was one of the Egyptian priests, who was in possession of part of the land; and who being dissatisfied with his condition, removed from thence to Judea; that

many persons collected together with him, who entertained a reverence for the Deity*, for Moses affirmed and taught that the Egyptians were in error, who likened the Deity to beasts and flocks; as were the Libyans and the Greeks, who attributed the figure of man to the gods; “this
 “one thing alone being God, which con-
 “tains us all, and the earth and the sea,
 “which we call heaven, the world, and the
 “nature of all things;” “but who,” continues the Jewish legislator, “possessing a
 “sound mind, shall dare to frame an image
 “of God like to any of the things with us?
 “for it becomes us, putting away every
 “image of living things, to appoint a temple
 “to him, and a sanctuary, honouring him
 “without any representation.”

Strabo goes on to state, that “Moses re-
 “marked that those, to whom visions were
 “imparted, should sleep both for themselves
 “and others, and that if they lived wisely
 “and justly, they might expect always some
 “gift and sign from the Divinity; but that
 “others should not entertain such hope;”
 he also informs us, that “by these means
 “Moses persuaded well-disposed men, and led

* Τιμῶντες τὸ θεῖον.

“ them away to the place where Jerusalem is
 “ now built, which he easily obtained posses-
 “ sion of, as not being an object of much emu-
 “ lation or contest, but a rocky and well-
 “ watered spot, in a barren and dry country ;
 “ that, at the same time, instead of the de-
 “ fence of arms, he set up sacred things and
 “ the Divinity, saying that he sought a seat
 “ for him, and promising to deliver such ser-
 “ vice and institutes as should not embarrass
 “ those who practised them, with expence, en-
 “ thusiastic fury, or other unsuitable impedi-
 “ ments ; and that by such means he esta-
 “ blished no casual or contemptible empire *,
 “ but one that was strengthened by the neigh-
 “ bouring people, who from intercourse and
 “ the advantages holden out, united with the
 “ strangers.”

Strabo observes further, that “ the followers
 “ of Moses being just and truly religious men,
 “ retained for some time these institutes, but
 “ that afterwards superstitious and tyrannical
 “ persons occupying the priesthood, the former
 “ introduced abstinence from flesh, which was
 “ still observed, and the use of circumcision

* Αρχὴν οὐ τὴν τυχεῖσαν. Longinus calls Moses *ἐκ τῶν τυχεῖ-
 αμεν*.

“ and excision, and some other things of this
 “ kind ; and the latter brought in habits of
 “ robbery, those who revolted from them har-
 “ rassing this and the adjoining country,
 “ while those who took part with the rulers,
 “ seizing the possessions of others, reduced
 “ much of Syria and Phœnicia to subjection ;
 “ but that still they honoured their city,
 “ which was not abominated as the seat of
 “ tyranny, but regarded and revered as a
 “ temple *.”

After some observations, he adds, “ such
 “ was Moses, and his successors, who, from
 “ no bad beginning, turned aside to what
 “ was degenerate ;” and he proceeds to re-
 late the subversion of the government ex-
 exercised by Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, by
 the power of Pompey, who observing the
 day of fasting, (or perhaps the Sabbath) in
 which the Jews abstained from all work,
 destroyed the fortifications, and took Jeru-
 salem, though surrounded by a ditch of 60
 feet in depth and 250 in breadth, and the
 temple also, notwithstanding it was protected
 by a wall cut out of the solid stone †.

* Strabo, l. xvi. vol. ii. p. 1082, 1083. Edit. Falconer.

† L. xvi. vol. ii. p. 1085.

The historian describes Jericho as a plain, encircled by mountains, sloping as a theatre, with a gentle declivity, abounding with plantations of palms, intermingled with garden plants, covered with habitations, and producing the balsam, efficacious in curing pains of the head, and dimness and suffusion of sight, it was peculiar to this land and Babylon, and to countries farther to the East*.

In speaking of the lake Sirbonis†, which Casaubon supposes to be that of Sodom, he represents its waters to be so heavy as not to admit divers, and as abounding with the asphaltos, which rises up from the depths, together with fuligenuous particles, (bubbling like boiling water); this is collected by the inhabitants of the country in reedy vessels, and it tarnishes brass, silver, and other shining substances, excepting gold. He mentions also many other indications of the country having been affected by fire, observing particularly, that the rocks near Moasada exhibited marks of injury; that the soil was in places reduced to ashes, that

* L. xvi. vol. ii. p. 1085-6.

† Lib. xvi. vol. ii. p. 1086. See Brown's Pseudodox. Epidem. b. 7. c. 17.

drops of pitch distilled from the rocks and foamy streams, which spread a fœtid odour to a distance, and that the remains of subverted houses were to be seen, so as to excite a belief in what was reported by the inhabitants, that formerly thirteen cities flourished there, of which a circuit of sixty stadia, belonging to Sodom, the chief of them was still preserved, but that by earthquakes, eruptions of fire, and hot bituminous sulphureous water, the rocks were injured, some cities swallowed up*, and others deserted by those who could escape.

These accounts, which confirm the sacred relations with respect to the Exodus, the operation of the inspired precepts, the mode of obtaining revelation by vision, the fertility of parts of Judea, and the memorials of Divine wrath, which the land occasionally displayed, are very well deserving of consideration.

* L. xvi. vol. ii. p. 1087. Wells supposes five.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Plutarch.

PLUTARCH, who was a native of Chæro-neæ in Bœotia, was born about the tenth year of Claudius, A. D. 52, and lived to the fourth or fifth year of Adrian, A. D. 121, having been appointed by that Emperor, procurator of Greece. He is said, also, to have performed the office of priest, to the Pythian Apollo.

The works of this distinguished writer are replete with instruction. His lives illustrate the most interesting characters of antiquity, contrasting their qualities by a parallel drawn between those who were capable of being compared in Grecian and Roman history. His moral and critical writings also are enlivened with much diversity of remark, and contain the most solid reflections, recommending a regard to the relative and social

duties of life ; his morality, however, is occasionally sullied by the impurities which the Heathen corruption introduced.

Plutarch was a kind of eclectic philosopher ; he follows sometimes the tenets of Plato, and sometimes those of Aristotle : he seems to have erred in supposing that matter was eternal ; and that the principle of evil had an independent existence. He inclined to the doctrine of a particular Providence, and with design, perhaps, to inculcate humanity, he countenanced the notion of transmigration : he represents dreams to be the most ancient means by which revelations were obtained *. He has been thought credulous, and like many other philosophical writers of antiquity, to have entertained too great a respect for oracles. It appears from his work on the defect of oracles, that some continued to give answers in his time, though they were rapidly falling into neglect : and he relates a story with respect to the death of the great Pan, which has been thought by some to refer to the death of Christ ; soon after which period the oracles are stated by Eusebius to have ceased †. Plutarch has left,

* Συμπόσιον. § 15. tom. i. Part 2d. Edit. Wyttenbach.

† Περὶ τῶν ἐκλεισμένων χρηστέων. § 18. p. 717. Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. v. c. 17. and Lardner, vol. vii. p. 245.

however, the strongest stigma upon the superstition of the Heathens, by writing a work to shew that even Atheism was more tolerable; and by describing the effects of superstition, particularly as it excited men to the horrible custom of human sacrifices. He relates that the Carthaginians immolated their own children to Saturn, and that if they had no offspring, they bought them like sheep for that purpose. He represents the mother as standing by, without commiseration or grief, which if she expressed by groans or tears, she was to be deprived of her reward; but the child was, nevertheless, offered up, while instruments were sounded before the image of the deity to drown the cries of the child*.

Plutarch speaks of the little dependance which is to be placed on the account of the remote ages, and considers them as full of fictions undeserving of credit, introduced by fabulists and poets. He himself relates many improbable stories, though it is possible that he sometimes gives them merely as a biographer.

Plutarch's character has been highly re-

† Περὶ Δεισιδαιμονίας, Tom. i. Pars. 2. p. 678. See Isa. lvii. 5.

garded as that of a distinguished moralist; and a Christian writer has observed, that if pardon from Divine resentment were to be sought, it could be requested for none more willingly than for Plato and Plutarch. His civil and religious principles are often highly excellent, and seem to have been founded upon an acquaintance with the best productions of antiquity: he regards the mind as the instrument by which God works, and he urges the necessity of conforming to the divine will, as if confident that it had been made known to mankind. There can be little doubt that some communications of the Gospel must have reached him; he does not appear, however, to have referred to their authority, when he observes, that “ we do “ not come into life to enact laws, but to “ obey those ordained by the gods, who “ order all things*.” Grotius remarks, however, of some part of his dialogue, concerning the slowness with which the gods inflict their punishments†, that if you substitute God for gods, you will find many things worthy of a Christian; and Theodoret is of opinion that he and others who lived after

* Consol. ad Apol.

† Περὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τῶν Θεῶν βραδέως τιμωρμένων.

the appearance of our Saviour, mixed many things which were derived from his instruction with their own discourses. In his dissertation on the $\epsilon\iota$, inscribed on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, he considers it as expressive of the Divine unity*.

Plutarch describes a vision, in which two goats were represented in Campania contending together, which were reported to prefigure Sylla and Marius; this, as well as a similar vision, spoken of by Cicero †, has been thought to have been suggested by the particulars described by Daniel, relating to the ram and the goat and other revelations.

Plutarch adverts to a circumstance which illustrates the motives and propriety of Vashti's conduct, mentioned in the Book of Esther, as he states that when the Persian kings were disposed to intemperance at their entertainments, they sent away their consorts and called in their musical women and concubines ‡. He misrepresents, however, in one instance, the character and customs of the Jews, stating that they revered an

* Plutarch, tom. ii. Pars. 2d. 575.

† Cicero de Divin. 4. i.

‡ Esther i. et Plutarch Γαμικα πρᾶγματᾶ. Tom. i. part 2. p. 551. Edit. Wittenbach.

ass, as having formerly shewn them a fountain of water*, agreeable to an idle account given by Democritus, as mentioned by Suidas.

There are numberless passages in Plutarch which deserve attention. His story of the præternatural escape of Arion, is possibly a corrupted report of the miracle by which Jonah was saved†. In speaking of the observance of the Sabbath, he states it to have been borrowed by the Greeks from the barbarians‡; and he alludes to the reverence which led the Jews to remain on the sacred day inactive in the defence of their cities, even when the scaling ladders were placed against their walls§. He refers to the circumstance of malefactors bearing their cross when conducted to execution||.

* Συμπόσιακον. Β. Γ. Δ. Tom. iii. p. 740.

† Συμπόσιον. p. 634. Tom. i. Pars. 2. and Jonah ii. iii.

‡ Περὶ Δισδαιμον. § 3. Tom. i. Pars. 2. p. 656.

§ Περὶ Δισδαιμον. § 8. Tom. i. Pars. 2. p. 670.

|| Συμπόσιακον, l. iv. c. 2. περὶ τῶν ὑπο, &c. p. 554, Edit. Paris, 1624. See also an enquiry into the religious knowledge of the Heathen philosophers, by the Rev. Daniel Guileford Waite.

CHAP. XXIX.

Lucian.

LUCIAN was a native of Samosata, a city on the Euphrates, though sprung from a family originally of Patræ in Achaia. It may be collected from particulars scattered in his works, that he was born under Trajan, who began to reign A. D. 98; and he continued to flourish under the dominion of the Antonines and Commodus.

The writings of Lucian are composed in a strain of satire so severe, that it was observed he spared neither gods nor men. He certainly ridiculed the Heathen deities, and a report prevailed of his having embraced, and afterwards apostatized from Christianity, but no authority is produced in confirmation of this account; and though there are passages in his works which seem to argue a respect for the relations of Scripture, and the pretensions of the sacred writers, and though under convictions excited by the progress of the Gospel, he exposed with sarcastic derision

the superstition which prevailed, there is still no evidence that he made any profession of the Christian faith.

The authenticity of some of the works here to be referred to, has been disputed apparently upon insufficient grounds. It cannot be questioned, however, that they are of great antiquity; and they afford evidence of opinions early entertained, and consistent with the period of Lucian.

In his *Timon the Misanthropist*, the author scoffs at Jupiter as reduced to utter insignificance; and in his *Philopatris*, (a suspected work) he professes, under the character of Tryphon, to have gained a knowledge of the universal Deity, of him who had existed before all things, and supported all things; which knowledge, calculated to raise the human mind, was derived from a person, whom he describes as “a bald-headed, long-nosed Galilean,” meaning, there can be little doubt, St. Paul; since he describes him as “an aerial traveller, who ascended to the third heaven, and learnt the most valuable things, renewing men by water, making them walk in the steps of the blessed, and saving them from the paths of the wicked*.”

* *Φιλοπατρις*. p. 770. tom. ii. Edit. Amstel.

In this passage there is a manifest allusion to the remarkable account in the xiith chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, in which the Apostle speaks of his having been caught up into the third heaven.

It is probable that it was from the same instructor that Lucian derived the just impressions which he entertained of God, as of a Being from whom no thoughts could be concealed * ; as likewise his knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity, which he describes as “ the high reigning God, great, immortal, heavenly, the Son of the Father and the Spirit proceeding from the Father, one from three and three from one †.”

He appears also to have obtained from St. Paul, or some other sacred instructor, an acquaintance with the doxology still used in the Greek Church, to which he seems to allude in the *Philopatris*, as beginning with the Father and ending with the Son ; and it is remarkable, that he swears by the unknown God of Athens ‡.

* Lucian's epigram, p. 836.

Ανθρώπους μὲν ἴσως λησεῖς ἀτοπον τι ποιήσας

οὐ λησεῖς δὲ θεός, ὃς δὲ λογίζομενος.

† ὑψιμίδοντα θεόν, μέγαν, ἄμβροτον, ὑράνιον, υἱὸν πατρὸς, πνῦμα ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐν ἐκ τριῶν, καὶ ἐξ ἑνὸς τρία ταῦτα νόμιζε. *Philopatris*, p. 770. comp. with 2 John v. 7.

‡ *Philopatris*, p. 769. and Acts xvii. 23.

He seems to refer to Moses, whom he styles the slow-tongued Prophet, giving an account, extracted from the play of the Birds of Aristophanes, relating to the first creation of the world from chaos by the Word, and describing the origin of light, of the earth, and of the heavenly bodies, in a manner which corresponds in many respects with the relations of the sacred historian. He states that “ he, who existed before all things, placed the earth on the waters, spread out the heavens, and fashioned the stars which men worshipped, and directed their course ; that he adorned the earth with flowers, and out of nothing gave being to men ; that from heaven he looks down upon the just and upon the unjust, and records their actions in a book ; and that from hence at an appointed day every individual will receive an exact retribution *.”

He seems to have been well acquainted with many other accounts of Scripture which had obtained circulation in his time, and he refers to passages both in the Old and New Testament.

Lucian lived in a country in which memo-

* Φιλοπατρις, tom. ii. p. 771. Edit. Amst. 1687. et Exod. iv. 10.

rials of the deluge were preserved, and he gives some extraordinary confirmation of the truth of that event, since he mentions it as a popular opinion among the Greeks that the generations of men, then living, were not derived from the original race of men, which he states to have been utterly extirpated, but from a second generation descended from Deucalion; that the Aborigines had been insolent and given to transgress the laws, being addicted to inhospitality and inexorable severity, and guilty of perjury, for which offences they were subjected to the flood, the earth opening its sluices and heavy showers of rain coming down, the rivers swelling and the sea rising, till the waters every where prevailed, and every mortal was drowned: Deucalion only, in consideration of his piety, being preserved in a large ark or chest with his wives and children, and every species of land animals in pairs, which by a Divine influence remained quietly in the ark during the continuance of the flood. In addition to this account, he states that the inhabitants of Hierapolis in Syria relate that a chasm was opened in their country to absorb the waters, over which Deucalion raised altars and erected a temple to Juno.

Moreover Lucian adds that in conformity to a law of Deucalion, enacted to commemorate the event, water was brought twice in the year from the sea to the temple of Hierapolis, not only by the priests, but by the Syrians, Arabians, and great multitudes beyond the Euphrates, which water was emptied into the temple, and ran into the opening below, being absorbed in an amazing quantity*.

Lucian speaks of Nineveh as being so entirely destroyed in his time, that no vestige of it remained.

In noticing the Christians, Lucian speaks of them in a manner which shews his acquaintance with their doctrines, he seems to sneer at their wisdom while he ridicules Peregrinus or Proteus, who was for a while a convert to their opinions†; and he cursorily remarks, that the great man, whom they worshipped for introducing the new religion into light, was crucified in Palestine. He was evidently impressed, however, with a respect for their virtues. He mentions, their contempt of earthly things, their having

* Περὶ τῆς Συρίας θεοῦ.

† See Philopatrīs. This tract and that of the death of Peregrinus, were forbidden to be read by Pope Alexander the Seventh.

all things in common* as brethren, their mutual love, charity, and exertion, their persuasion of immortality, and their rejoicing in tribulation, their disregard of death, and readiness to be martyred; intermingling occasionally scoffs against them, and thus perpetuating an unsuspected testimony to the virtues of men, whom he vainly endeavoured to represent as visionary enthusiasts. In the *Philopatris*, one of the interlocutors is represented in answer to a question whether the affairs of the Syrians are recorded in Heaven, to have said that they were, for that Christ was among that people†. These, and many other passages, besides those which have been quoted, particularly in the *Philopatris*, (in which work there appears to be an allusion to the Lord's Prayer,) are entitled to much regard, for though it has been disputed whether that dialogue be really the production of Lucian, there is no doubt that it was written by some heathen, and at latest, in the third or fourth century‡.

* Περὶ τῆς Περσικῆς τελευτῆς.

† P. 773. Edit. Amstel.

‡ Bull Def. Fidei Nicen. § 2. c. 4.

CHAP. XXX.

Epictetus.

EPICETUS, according to Suidas, was a Phrygian, born at Hierapolis. He was a servant of Epaphroditus, whom some suppose to have been the freedman and attendant of the chamber to Nero*, and others a procurator of Trajan †; some imagine that he was the same with Epaphras, the fellow-labourer of St. Paul ‡.

This great moralist is reported to have been taught at Nicopolis, in Epirus. He seems afterwards to have lived at Rome, and to have been treated kindly by Adrian. He was professedly a Stoic, but blended some

* Sueton. Nero, et Domit. c. 14. Plin. Panegyr. c. 53. Xiphil. p. 766.

† See Whiston's Note on Josephus, cont. Apion, l. 1. et Grotius on Luke i. 3.

‡ Philemon 23d verse. Coloss. i. 7. Philip. ii. 25, and iv. 18.

of the improved discoveries of his time with the original tenets of that sect. The system of the Stoics was calculated to produce somewhat of a noble and independent spirit ; but the fortitude, which it supported, rested rather on pride and apathy, than on any well established ground of resignation to the divine will. Zeno and his followers entertained, indeed, a reverence for the Supreme Being, and believed him to have ordained what was best contrived to promote the welfare of mankind *. They inculcated patience, moderation, and forbearance † ; but notwithstanding the resignation which they professed, and the obligation which they admitted, to sustain whatever might be appointed, they seem in many instances to have had recourse to suicide as to a relief from those afflictions which were judged to be irremediable ; and they entertained great variety of opinion concerning the immortality of the soul and a state of future reward. Epictetus indeed himself adopted just convictions of the Deity, and of the duty of men

* Arrian. *Των του ΕΠΙΚΤΗΤΟΥ Διατριβων*. Edit. Upton. Lib. i. c. 6. 12. lib. iii. c. 18. and 24. lib. iv. c. 7. and Matt. x. 29, 30.

† Ibid. Lib. i. c. 13. lib. ii. c. 16. lib. iii. c. 5.

to abide by the post appointed to them by God, with submission to his will till he should be pleased to remove us.

Epictetus had a mind more humble than many of the Stoics, and was disposed to accept of the principles to which his reason subscribed, from whatever source they might be derived. He does not appear to have sufficiently known or attended to the evidence of revelation; though he speaks highly of those benefactors who discovered and brought truth to light. Some, however, have represented him to have been a convert to Christianity, and to have partaken as it were of the first diffusion of divine grace. St. Austin expresses a wish that he might be among the inheritors of eternal life. It is probable that he profited by the promulgation of the Gospel, though not professedly a convert, since he lived at the very time that its principles were asserted by St. Paul at Rome, even in the palace of Nero. He calls the Christians Galileans, and bears testimony to their freedom from fear and contempt of danger*. The heathen philosopher displays in his works a conformity to the turn of thought employed by the sacred writers, but he

* Lib. iv. c. 7. p. 621. See John viii. 32.

speaks of the Christians in a manner which tends to prove, that he had not accepted their faith, since he represents their courage and conduct to be the effect of habit. He exemplified, in his own life, those principles of submission to the will of Providence, which he professed, and instances of the moderation and patient forbearance of his temper are recorded in well-known stories and memorials of him *.

He lived in a period of great tyranny, when the capricious and cruel oppression of many of the Roman Emperors called forth very noble efforts of patience: but it was the spirit of Christianity alone which could generate qualities equal to the trials and occasions in which they were displayed. He was banished by Domitian, and retiring to Nicopolis, continued to inculcate moral instruction there. He exhorts his disciples to contemplate death, chains, tortures, exile, and all these with courage and reliance on him who had called them to such things, and judged them worthy of a post in which they might shew what the rational governing faculty might do †.

* See the Epigram referred to at p. 248 of this work.

Δηλος Επικλήτος γενομένη.

† Carter's Epictetus, book ii. c. 1.

The reflection, which he expresses upon death, is particularly deserving of attention :

“ Men,” says he, “ are disturbed not by things, but by the notions and principles which they form concerning things. Death, for instance, is not terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates, but the terror consists in our notion of death that it is terrible. When, therefore, we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved, let us never impute it to others, but to ourselves, that is, to our own principles. It is the action of an uninstructed person to lay the fault of his own bad condition upon others ; of one entering upon instruction to lay the fault upon himself ; and of one perfectly instructed, neither on others, or on himself *.”

There were originally twenty books of the discourses of Epictetus, which appear to have been committed to writing by Arrian. Of these, four remain, and together with the *Enchiridion*, and some fragments, copied from Stobæus, Antoninus, and Maximus, compose a system of morality, highly cre-

* *Enchiridion*, § 5. Carter's translation.

ditable to a heathen, but betraying many of the defects of Pagan philosophy, and destitute of those motives and sanctions, which give such efficacy to the instructions of the Gospel. They have been holden in deserved estimation by Heathens and Christians. Lucian in his work against the buyers of books, mentions, that the lamp of Epictetus sold for three thousand drachms, to a person who was persuaded, that if he went to sleep with it in his room, the wisdom of Epictetus would offer itself to him in a dream, and produce in him a similitude to that admirable old man.

Amidst much good sense which is displayed in the code of Epictetus, there are occasionally some marks of affectation, and a severity of restraint tending to suppress the natural feelings of the human heart, which savour much of artificial austerity, and which are such as led Josephus to remark that there was a resemblance between the Stoics, and the Pharisees among the Jews.

The passages in the writings of Epictetus, which present a similarity to the sentiments and expressions of Scripture, are numerous. Thus, for instance, he treats of the soul as

being a part of the Deity, in a manner which reminds us of texts, in which the Evangelists speak of imparting the Spirit of God to man *. From our relation to God he argues the necessity of elevated sentiments †, raised above earthly things, of affections of diffusive benevolence, and of exemption from fear ‡. He describes man as a mixture of clay ; expresses a love of piety as suitable to a reasonable being ; and defines the essential character of piety to be the forming of right opinions concerning God, as existing and regulating the universe with goodness and justice §. He inculcates the necessity of looking to the dictates of nature in the privacy of retirement || ; and of becoming like unto God. He intimates a desire of being liberated from the flesh and its cares ; speaks of putting off the body as a garment ¶ ; and points out the superior wisdom of worldly men, in some respects, over those who are devoted to religion. He speaks of a sinner as not doing

* Lib. i. c. 3. lib. iii. c. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 19. 1 John iv. 13.

† Lib. i. c. 3.

‡ Lib. i. c. 9. comp. lib. i. c. 1. § 3. with Gen. ii. 7. and Job x. 9. xxxiii.

§ Enchiridion, § 31. comp. with Heb. xi. 6.

|| Lib. i. c. 4.

¶ Lib. i. c. 25. p. 130 Τὸ τελευταῖον χιτῶνάριον.

what he wished or allowed *; and of the expediency of becoming, as to external appearance, fools that we may attain wisdom †. His remarks upon the necessity imposed upon the Stoics of not entangling themselves with relations, have a resemblance to what St. Paul says, when apparently arguing against marriage.

The precepts also, which inculcate the virtues ornamental to the female character, as displayed in decency, modesty, and discretion, have a remarkable conformity with the directions of the Apostle upon these subjects ‡. The parallel might be pursued to other passages which enjoin forgiveness of injuries §; which point out the tendency of riches to mislead the mind ||; the necessity of not judging others without the recollection that we ourselves are to be judged ¶; the propriety of daily discourse concerning God **;

* Comp. lib. ii. c. ult. p. 343. with Rom. vii. 15.

† Comp. Enchiridion, § 13. with 1 Cor. iii. 18.

‡ Enchiridion, § 40, compare with 1 Tim. ii. 9.

§ Enchiridion, § 42, with Luke xxiii. 33. lib. i. c. 25. with Matt. v. 44.

|| Enchiridion, § 15, with Mark x. 23.

¶ See Fragments 53 and 55, Rom. xiv. 10.

** See Fragment 113, and Deuteron. vi. 7. Psalms lxxi. 15—24. and cv. 2.

the danger of attempting to please man instead of God * ; the servitude of sin † ; the design of God to visit the nations in mercy ; the duty of a regard to the inferior classes of society ; the propriety of avoiding immoderate laughter and swearing ‡.

These, not to mention any general correspondences of expression, might seem to prove some acquaintance with the Scriptures, or with such of them at least as were then known by general dispersion, in the time of Epictetus.

* Enchiridion, § 23. with Galat. i. 10. See also Raphael. 1. c. 47. Suicer. tom. i. p. 959.

† Lib. iv. c. 1. § 1. 3. compare with John viii. 33, 34.

‡ See Enchiridion, § 33. with Eccles. ii. 2. vii. 3—6. Eccclus. xix. 30, xxi. 20. and James v. 12.



CHAP. XXXI.

Flavius Arrian.

FLAVIUS ARRIAN was a native of Nicomedia, a disciple of Epictetus, and as some say a priest of Ceres and Proserpine, in Bithynia. He lived in the time of Adrian, (who began to reign A. D. 117,) and enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor so much, as to be appointed to the government of Cappadocia, when that province was in arms, he also distinguished himself by victories over the Alani and Massagetæ.

He appears to have been presented with the freedom of Athens and of Rome, and to have attained the senatorial dignity in the latter city, where he practised as a civilian. His works were much esteemed by Antoninus Pius, whom he assisted by his instructions, communicating to him the knowledge which he himself had derived from Epictetus.

Arrian seems to have had also the name of Xenophon, and to have been called the younger Xenophon, from the resemblance which he bore to that distinguished author by his writings and actions. A work on hunting, which he composed, and which remained long unpublished, in manuscript, was supposed to be the treatise of Xenophon the elder upon that subject. Arrian produced many works*. He wrote the Bithynian and Alanian histories; a short account of them may be found in Photius†, and a fragment of the last in the second volume of Blanchard's edition of his works.

Arrian is said to have composed eight dissertations upon Epictetus, four of which are supposed by Fabricius to remain‡, and to be those usually published, as the Discourses of Epictetus, together with the Enchiridion of Epictetus, which Arrian seems to have reduced into its present form.

His two principal works, which are still extant, are the Histories of Alexander's Expedition, and of India, both valuable productions.

* Fabricius in Arrian scrip.

† Photius Bibliothec. p. 51 et 234. Edit. Steph. 1612.

‡ Fabricius in Arrian. Aulus Gellius, l. i. c. 2. l. xvii. c. 19

The former, which he professes to have composed by Divine assistance, exhibits an interesting description of the victories and conduct of that great conqueror, and of the fall of the Persian Empire. It appears to have been composed in part, on the authority of Aristobulus and Ptolemy Lagus, who accompanied Alexander. It is marked with the appearance of truth, and is very different from the romance of Quintus Curtius, though it contains some accounts, particularly of the prowess of Alexander, which are utterly incredible.

Arrian appears to have entertained more than a full confidence in his own powers as sufficient for the greatness of his undertaking. After speaking of Alexander as a General, with whom no other was to be brought in competition, he adds, "that this was the reason
 " which first induced him to attempt the
 " history *, not deeming himself altogether
 " unworthy to transmit his mighty acts to
 " posterity ; but who," says he, " I am that
 " thus characterise myself, and what is my
 " name, though that be far from obscure,
 " concerns the reader but little to know : let
 " it suffice to say, that an extreme passion,

* See Rook's Arrian, vol. i. p. 27.

“ wherein I have always indulged myself
 “ from my youth, has been to me instead of
 “ family, city, or magistracy, altogether,
 “ whence I may, perhaps, be little less wor-
 “ thy a place among the most celebrated
 “ authors of Greece, than Alexander among
 “ its most famous heroes.”

Contemplating Alexander, we must consider him as an instrument in the hand of Providence* ; and examining his conduct with that indulgence to which he is entitled as an heathen, deluded by false notions of glory, we must admit that notwithstanding many and great defects, he displayed noble qualities. Arrian has not suppressed those parts of his character which are open to censure ; he represents him as vain, capricious, and often unjust and cruel ; and in tracing the course of the conqueror, as marked out by Arrian, we must admit that he is justly described by Orosius, “ as a great gulf of
 “ miseries, and a most dreadful hurricane
 “ which laid waste the east.” The greatness of his designs, however, whether previously concerted, or formed in consequence of his success, has thrown a splendour on his

* Arrian speaks of Alexander in these remarkable words :
 ἔκουν ἐδ' ἱμοὶ ἔξω τῆς θεοῦ φαναι ἂν δοκεῖ ἀνὴρ, ἐδὲν ἄλλω ἀν-
 θρώπων ἐνικώς. Lib. vii. p. 505. Edit. Amstel.

achievements; and the permanent advantage, which resulted from his measures, has proved that his plans were not merely stupendous, but conceived with much wisdom and regard to the general interests of the world.

The circumstances of the life of this conqueror, considered with reference only to his own fate, are full of instruction, and are well applied by Juvenal, to illustrate the vanity of ambition.

Having in a few years attained the highest distinctions of human power, successful almost to the extent of his wishes, yet perishing prematurely at an early age, and not leaving children to inherit his conquests, which seem scattered by the breath of heaven, he holds out a striking example to the world.

His death appears to have been occasioned by the effect of his exertions and by excess, at the moment when he was projecting an expedition by land and sea against Arabia, the country which seems at all times to have been sheltered by Divine protection, and in which Alexander hoped to establish a claim to be worshipped as a god *. Short as his

* *Αναβάσις*, l. vii. p. 486. Edit. Amstel.

life was, it was sufficient to enable him to open a communication between various countries, which was subservient to the promotion of commerce and a beneficial intercourse; and to appoint the building of cities, admirably calculated for the maintenance of connection with each other. Alexander was born in the first year of the 106th Olympiad, according to Plutarch, that is about 356 years before Christ, and he died about 324 years before that *Æra*; every particular of his history and character is the more important, as he was an object of inspired prophecy, and effected great revolutions in the world.

He is described by Arrian as victorious in the same manner as he is foretold by Daniel, who speaks of him under the figure of the he-goat, which was his appropriate ensign, and which, as Daniel expressly declares, designates the King of Grecia*.

The historian exhibits the accomplishment of those prophetic representations, which exactly foretold the rapidity of the conquests of Alexander, “coming from the west,” and “extending” (his power) “over the face

* Ch. viii. 21.

of the whole earth * ;” the defeat of Darius ; and the overthrow of the Persian dominion †.

He observes, that it was undoubtedly decreed by fate, that the Persians should be deprived of the empire of Asia by the Macedonians, as the Medes had been by the Persians, and the Assyrians before them by the Medes ‡.

The ten books, which Arrian wrote concerning the transactions that took place after Alexander’s death, are unfortunately lost, excepting a few extracts from them which are preserved by Photius§. We must look therefore to Diodorus, and other writers, for the proofs of the completion of those passages in Daniel, which related to the partition of his dominion after his death, when the kingdom of the King of the Greeks was divided into four parts, “ four kingdoms standing up “ out of the nations, but not in his power || ;” his servants, as is expressed in the Book of

* Dan. viii. 5, 6. Compare also Arrian’s Dissert. lib. iv. c. 3. p. 489. sub Fin. with Matt. vi. 1.

† Dan. viii. 6, 7.

‡ See Rooke’s Arrian, b. i. p. 75.

§ Bibliotheca, p. 215, &c.

|| Dan. viii. 8—22.

Maccabees, “bare rule every one in his
 “ place. And after his death, they all put
 “ crowns upon themselves, so did their sons
 “ after them many years: and evils were
 “ multiplied in the earth, and there came out
 “ of them a wicked root *.”

Arrian confirms other accounts of prophecy, besides those already mentioned, as especially some relating to the fall of Tyre † and Babylon ‡. He reports what has been stated by other historians, that the part of Syria called Palestine, gave itself up peaceably to Alexander, who might therefore, as Josephus has represented, have visited Jerusalem during the siege of Tyre, and at that time possibly might have seen the Prophecies of Daniel, since he appears to have professed, during the siege, to have received promises of Divine support.

The Indian history, which is collected from Greek writers, contains some historical and geographical details of the country of India, and of the manners and customs which yet prevail, composed with apparent

* 1 Macc. i. 8—10.

† L. ii. p. 129. 147.

‡ Lib. iii. p. 196.

accuracy. Arrian describes the character of the people, under a colouring similar to what now exists, illustrating the permanency of eastern manners, as particularly is shewn by what he states of the Indian casts, the principles of the Bramins, and the immolation of widows. He mentions also the peculiar vegetation of the Banian tree. The *Periplus*, or voyage of Nearchus from India to the Euphrates, the first event (as Dr. Vincent has observed), of general importance to mankind, was transcribed probably from the *Journal of Nearchus* *. That of Hanno from Carthage, along the coast of Africa, bordering on the Atlantic, was more remarkable for its enterprize than for its discoveries †.

Alexander's knowledge of geography was very limited. He fancied from some slight circumstances of correspondence between the Acesines and the Nile, that he had discovered the fountains of the latter river in the sources of the former; and in writing to his mother Olympias, he proclaimed this dis-

* *INAIKA*, p. 543. Vincent's *Disquisition*.

† *INAIKA*, p. 591.

covery. The result of his observations, however, is accurately given by Arrian, and in many instances is remarkably confirmed by modern geographers.

The historian wrote also a periplus of the Euxine Sea, addressed to Adrian, and some have ascribed to him likewise a periplus of the Erythrean Sea, containing observations more recent than those which he collected in his Indian history from Nearchus: but as this work betrays some ignorance of the countries mentioned, and of the extent of Alexander's conquests, it cannot be received as the production of Arrian, of Nicomedia. It is however a relation, in many respects valuable, composed, probably, by a Greek of Alexandria, and before the time of Arrian, for it seems to prove that a trade was carried on by the Erythrean Sea to India. Arrian was the author of the Life of Dio the Syracusan; of an account of the Acts of Timoleon in Sicily against Dionysius*, and of a book on Military Tactics†; but these productions do not appear to contain any thing illustrative of the objects of this work.

* Phot. p. 234, 235.

† Edit. Blancard Amstel. 1683.

CHAP. XXXII.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

THE character of this distinguished Emperor is involved with the history of his time. He succeeded Antoninus Pius, ascending the imperial throne in conformity to the wishes of the senate, A. D. 161. Through his whole life he cherished a love of literature and of virtue; and while he governed the empire of the world with much moderation and wisdom, and defended its limits with military skill and valour, he appears at all times to have softened the majesty of his elevated rank by the mildness of his philosophy, and the admirable simplicity of his manners, so that it was observed, that he seemed desirous of rendering himself useful to others, and obedient to the gods, insomuch that in every action he shewed himself just, and in all his discourses expressed the truth. His

conduct however towards the Christians must be allowed to detract from this praise, since he is stated to have permitted, if not to have countenanced, a severe persecution against them*.

The meditations of Marcus Aurelius in twelve books, compose a code of Ethics, which demonstrates how much the general tone of morality was improved by the influence of Christianity, even where the principles of the Gospel were not professedly adopted.

The Emperor seems to have been a Stoic, trained in the school of Epictetus, but mingling with the tenets of that philosopher some of the doctrines of Pythagoras, derived possibly from Apollonius. He himself, indeed, informs us, that he drew instruction from various teachers, and Gataker represents him to have been much indebted to Revelation, which had widely spread its communications in the time of Aurelius. The Emperor observes, somewhat remarkably, that it was fully acknowledged “ that a man “ might exist divinely perfect, and yet not be “ known as such by any, and that this was “ particularly to be remembered †.” It has

* Sulpic. Sever. Hist. lib. ii. c. 45. Euseb. H. E. l. iv. c. 26. et Chron. p. 169.

† Lib. vii. § 41. Edit. Oxon. 1680. P. 230.

been said, that he was deluded by the impostor Alexander ; be this as it may, though he was a persecutor of the Christians, he became at length sensible of their virtues, and he appears to have had recourse in a period of danger to their prayers, from which time he expressed towards them a liberal spirit of toleration *, in letters still extant, addressed to the senate and to the assembly of different states at Ephesus †. He particularly seems to have been impressed with the propriety of their conduct, and their reliance on God, which appeared to increase in proportion to their danger ; while at the same time he very unphilosophically attributes the fortitude with which they sustained death, to obstinacy ‡.

Marcus Aurelius seems to have considered the human mind as breathed from God, and again to be absorbed in the divine nature. Like Epictetus, he endeavours to distinguish between external and internal things ; and to establish virtue and happiness, by asserting the independence of the mind, and the necessity of rendering it superior to those circumstances which are contingent, and not sub-

* Tertul. Apol. c. 5. Dio Cass. l. 71. vol. ii. p. 1183.

† Vide Euseb. et Epist. ad Senatum.

‡ Τὴν αὐτὴν ἐξέστην. L. 11. § 3. p. 106. Edit. Gataker.

ject to its controul. His dissertations are not much enlivened by illustration, or exemplified like the Christian precepts by incident and character ; but they exhibit a just and amiable detail of instructions : inculcating moderation, patience, and content, describing humility as becoming the most elevated stations, and even the imperial rank ; recommending prayer and devotion as suitable to our nature, and adapted to human life, (which, like the Apostle, he compares to a contest in wrestling *) ; and enjoining men to discard all solicitude concerning food, raiment, and such like concerns †, to contemplate death with serenity, and to look to the termination of their course that it might be cheered by the remembrance of virtue ‡. The Emperor himself demonstrated the effect of his principles to the last, and closed his valuable life by an admonition to his son Commodus.

* Lib. vii. § 46. Pugillaria M. A. Antonini. Edit. Paris, 1774, p. 54.

† Compare with Matt. vi. 25—34.

‡ Lib. ix. c. 3. lib. xii. c. 34.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Oppian.

OPPIAN was born at Anazarba, in Cilicia, in the early part of the reign of Commodus, who ascended the imperial throne, A. D. 180. The poet was of high family, enjoyed the advantage of a good education, and was distinguished for his filial affection. By the offerings of his muse he conciliated the favour of Severus. He wrote two poems, one on fishing, the other on hunting, and a piece on fowling, which though unpublished, is supposed to be still extant in some library in Italy. Different sentiments have been entertained with respect to his poetry: it is certainly not deficient in interest, or spirit, though it must be admitted to have few claims to be brought in competition with that of Virgil, to which it has been sometimes considered as but little inferior. In

his poem on hunting there is a spirited description of a horse*, which some have thought to have been borrowed in part from the admired representation of this animal in the xxxixth chapter of the book of Job.

There is a passage in the poem also which tends to prove, that the account of Jacob's contrivance to encrease the number of the speckled and spotted sheep was agreeable to physical circumstances, ascertained by experience in other instances †.

* De Venatione, lib. i. l. 182. et seq.

† See *κυνήγ.* lib. i. There is a relation in *Ælian*, which still more directly establishes the fact described in *Genesis*.

CHAP. XXXV.

Dion Cassius Cocceianus.

DION CASSIUS was born at Nice, in Bithynia. He was the son of Apronianus, a man of consular dignity, who was successively governor of Cilicia and Dalmatia, under the reigns of Trajan and Adrian.

Dion Cassius himself was advanced to the dignity of senator and consul, and exercised his office under the Emperor Alexander Severus, the son of Mammæa, A. D. 226, having previously had a command at Pergamus and Smyrna, and in Africa and Pannonia.

The history composed by this distinguished author, includes the time from the landing of Æneas in Italy, to the year of Rome 982, when Alexander Severus entered on the consulship the third time, A. D. 228.

It was written in eighty books, forty-six of which remain; the thirty-sixth is the first of those which are entire; only part of the thirty-fifth having escaped the ravage

of time. From this to the sixtieth the work is nearly complete, but of the last twenty, merely a compendium remains, composed by Xiphilinus, a monk of Constantinople, who published an epitome from the thirty-fifth to the eightieth, nearly in the words of the original author.

Dion Cassius professed to be excited by a Divine dream, to write his history *. He appears to have been addicted to superstition, if we are to judge from the abridgment of Xiphilinus; and he seems to have sacrificed truth to flattery, or to have been the dupe of an improbable tale, when he asserted that Vespasian restored a blind man to sight, by anointing his eyes with spittle, and that he also cured another person who was lame in his hand, by placing his foot upon it. The historian represents both these men to have been forewarned in dreams, that they should experience these benefits from the Emperor, who probably was not unwilling to be thought to work miracles, concerted it should seem in imitation of those which were performed by Christ †.

* Commodus, L. 72. p. 1223. and Xyland. Præf. vol. ii. p. 1386. Edit. Fabricii.

† Vespasian, L. 66. vol. ii. p. 1082.

Dion gives also a strange account of Apollonius Tyanæus having seen at Ephesus all that passed on the death of Domitian, at Rome, at the very instant that the tyrant was under the hands of the assassin, so that he uttered the word *Stephanus*, which was the ruffian's name, bidding him strike boldly. This seems to have been somewhat similar to what is reported of the superstition which prevails concerning second sight among the Highlanders *.

The historian speaks of the Jews as a people who worshipped the ineffable and invisible God †, without any image, exceeding the rest of mankind in their religious services, having built a temple of great magnitude and beauty, and abstaining on the Sabbath from all labour and action. He gives some striking proofs of the devotion, with which they incurred any danger rather than defend themselves on the Sabbath-day. He mentions them as a people different from the rest of mankind, and states them to have encreased so much at Rome, as to be scarcely within the controul of the laws. Baronius accuses him of having expressed

* Domit. L. 67. vol. ii. p. 1116. and see Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands, p. 243.

† L. 37. § 17. vol. i. p. 122. Justin. 36. 2, 3.

himself in a manner unfavourable to Christianity. He often however mentions facts which are referred to by the Sacred writers, and which relate to the progress of the Gospel, and to the persecutions which the earlier converts sustained. He describes the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, and states that his soldiers did not immediately rush forward to the temple, being restrained by religious reverence*.

In the seventy-first book, Xiphilinus relates that Marcus Aurelius, in a battle with the Quadi, in which his forces were much harassed by heat and thirst, applied to the Christians of Melitene, who were in the army, requesting them to address their God, and intreat him to send rain, which was in consequence granted, to the great refreshment of the soldiers, who were also afterwards assisted by the hail and lightning, which completed the defeat of their enemies. The legion, in which the Christians were enrolled, was in consequence called the thundering legion†. Other works, besides those above mentioned, have been ascribed to Dion, as particularly the life of Arrian.

* L. 66. p. 1081, and Lardner's Testimon. vol. viii. c. 27.

† Vol. ii. L. 71. p. 1183. and Euseb. H. E. L. 5. c. 5. Francf. 1592.

CHAP. XXXV.

Dionysius Cassius Longinus.

LONGINUS, who is called also Cassius, is supposed by Fabricius to have been the grandson of Cassius Longinus, mentioned by Plutarch*. He is by some represented to have been a Syrian, though other accounts state that he was born at Athens, and quitted that city at the invitation of Zenobia, the unfortunate Queen of Palmyra, in whose service he was employed. He is said to have dictated a letter which she wrote to Aurelian†, and in consequence of the resentment which it excited, to have been put to death, when the Emperor took possession of Palmyra, A. D. 273; sustaining his fate with great fortitude, while Zenobia, who

* Proœm. Συμπος. l. 9. et Suidas.

† Vopiscus in Aurel. c. 27.

was overtaken in her flight, in attempting to pass the Euphrates, was reserved to grace the triumph at Rome.

Zenobia, who lived in a city, which, as well as Balbec, is said to have been built by Solomon, is stated to have been a convert to the Jewish faith*, and some even report that she had adopted Christianity. The writings of the Old and New Testament were circulated through the Roman empire before the time of Longinus, and probably the latter as well as the former were known to him. Zenobia's attention must have been attracted not only to the Gospel, but to controversies concerning its doctrines, since she supported Paul of Samosata, the schismatical bishop of Antioch in his contumacy against the council by which he was deposed.

In a manuscript of the New Testament, in the Vatican, there is a passage from Longinus, containing a list of the greatest orators; and Paul of Tarsus is mentioned as "the chief supporter of an opinion not yet established." Fabricius considers this as

* 2 Chron viii. 4. 1 Kings xix. 18. Wood's Preface to Hudson's Longinus.

inserted by some Christian, but assigns no reason for his opinion*. Porphyry, who was a disciple of Longinus, was instructed by Origen.

Longinus composed many works which have perished, excepting some fragments preserved by Porphyry and Eusebius, and his well known work on the sublime. This latter is imperfect, though what remains of it is highly interesting. In it he speaks of Moses, and draws an example of the sublime from the book of Genesis which has attracted much attention. "The Jewish legislator," says he, "no ordinary person, having conceived a just opinion of the power of God," has nobly expressed it in the beginning of his laws, "and God said," what?—"Let there be light; and there was light." "Let there be earth; and there was earth." Huet and Le Clerc professed themselves unable to discover the sublimity of the passage; Boileau, however, did justice to it. The impression consists not so much in the words as in the sense, which expresses the omnipotence of the Supreme Being. The

* Fabric. Biblioth. Græc.

sublime, as the Longinus of modern times* has observed is always some modification of power. The representation of Moses is the more striking, however, from the simplicity of the language employed, and it has been well remarked, that if it be compared with the description of the creation given from the sacred account by Josephus, in his own language, we shall soon be sensible of the difference between the two representations, in point of sublimity.

* See Burke on the sublime and beautiful, § 5, and Longin. edit. Jacob Tolli, Note in § 9. p. 62.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Flavius Claudius Julianus.

JULIAN was educated in the principles of Christianity. He imbibed, however, some early prejudices against its institutions, and being seduced by the Heathen philosophers and priests, particularly at Athens*, he secretly abjured the faith, but continued for some time externally to profess it†. Having been flattered with the hope of succeeding to the imperial throne, and been engaged in ambitious designs against Constantius, who had given him his sister in marriage, and entrusted him with the command of his armies, he became strengthened in his attachment to

* Theodoret. Hist. l. iii. c. 3. In the reign of Valentinian, the Athenians petitioned for the restoration of the Eleusinian mysteries.

† Fabric. de Julian. Libanius Panegyri. et Tillemont, t. 4. Hist. Imp. 917. Ammian. Marcel. l. xx. c. 3. l. xxi. c. 1.

the Gentile worship, from its opposition to the sentiments of the Emperor.

On obtaining the sole possession of the throne, A. D. 361, he declared openly in favour of Heathenism, and began to manifest great hatred against the Christians, but was prevented partly by policy, and partly by the general mildness of his character, from exercising towards them those measures of extreme and sanguinary persecution, which, as he observed, promoted, when employed by others, the cause of the Gospel, and which excited his admiration and envy of the fortitude of its martyrs*.

In a clandestine spirit of intolerance, however, excited upon this occasion, he connived at the inhumanity of the governors of the provinces, and derided the complaints of the Christians whom he spoiled, observing, with insulting mockery, that by rendering them poor, he promoted their reception into heaven†. He boasted, that he had excited the cities in the neighbourhood of Antioch, to overturn the temples of the martyrs, which he stiles the sepulchres

* Epist. xlii. and lii. Baron. A. D. 362. Theodoret. l. iii. iv. et Augustin. de civit. dei. 18—82. Socrat. l. iii. c. 12.

† Epist. xliii. λόγος 7, p. 224. Edit. Spanheim Lips. 1696.

of the atheists *, conducting himself towards them in a manner which shews that he had little claim to the character of generosity, which has been ascribed to him by Shaftesbury †, and other writers.

By depriving the Christian priesthood of the privileges which they claimed of exemption from the civil power, and by reprehending the dissentions of party zeal, he did real service to the cause of religion, while he maintained the just rights of the temporal authority. He offended, however, as much against all rules of good government, as against all principles of true philosophy, when, upon observing that the Christians, who had made any progress in human learning, employed it with great success in refuting the errors of the Heathens, “piercing them as it were by their own pens,” he forbad rhetorical and grammatical instructors from teaching in the schools, unless they would worship the deities which were publicly revered; thus interdicting the cultivation of literature, except under Heathen institutions, and alledging the pretence, that

* Misopog. ap. Julian Oper. p. 327. Edit. Spanhem. Lips. 1696.

† See Characteristics, vol. iii. c. 2.

it was absurd that those, who explained Homer and other ancient writers should be permitted to dishonour the gods, which those writers revered *.

Having relapsed into the almost exploded follies of Heathenism, Julian indeed, became the slave of the most abject and degrading superstition, and directed all his efforts to the restoration of the declining cause of idolatry, renewing, with the blindest zeal, the practice of divination, and himself inspecting the sacrifices. The imperial power however, and the eminent talents which he exerted, during the short time that he was permitted by Providence to reign, served but to illustrate the impotency of Heathen rage, and to call forth the proofs of a Divine interference in support of the Gospel.

Having in the desire of military fame, projected a war against the Persians, he made great preparations for the expedition amidst the murmurs of his subjects. In order to propitiate the Heathen Deities, he loaded their altars with hecatombs and rare victims, procured by sea and land. The effect was only to corrupt the discipline of his army, the soldiers being excited to excess by a participation of the sacrifices lavishly distributed

* Epist. xlii. p. 423. Edit. Spanhem.

among them*. Having wearied the oracles and attempted to open again the fatidical sources of the Castalian spring which had been closed by Adrian, and having at length obtained favourable auspices on Mount Casius †, he carried devastation into Assyria, but having after some vicissitudes of fortune received a mortal wound in an engagement with the Persians, he expired in the 32d. year of his age, having only reigned one year and eight months. Libanius unjustly intimates that he was insidiously killed by the Christians in the action ‡.

The character of Julian forms a striking contrast to that of M. Aurelius Antoninus. In the former we see the force of truth vainly struggling with and “being foolishness” to one who was imbued with the prejudices of the Greek philosophy: in the latter we perceive the influence of Divine grace operating on the humble mind, and “made unto it wisdom and righteousness §.”

The works of Julian display considerable genius, and an intimate acquaintance with

* Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxii. c. 12. Edit. Gronov. 1693.

† Ibid. lib. xxii. c. 14. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. c. 22.

‡ Vide Orat. Libanii de ulsciscendâ Juliani nece. Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. xi. in Julian; et Zonaras Annals xiii. N. 13. Ammian. Marcell. l. 25. c. 3.

§ 1 Cor. i. 18—31.

the best productions of antiquity ; they consist of panegyrical orations and discourses relating to the character and acts of Constantius and his Empress Eusebia, and of the deities and philosophical sects of his time ; together with some epistles, and two other works, the one entitled Cæsars, being a satirical review of the characters of the preceding Emperors ; the other Misopogon, in which he reflects upon the inhabitants of Antioch for having thwarted his views and ridiculed his person. The Emperor often forgot his dignity in his puerile boasts and sarcastic style, and excited a spirit of retaliation and derision which he keenly felt*. He seems every where eager to express his zeal for Paganism, and his aversion to the Jewish, as well as to the Christian dispensation. Whatever respect indeed, he may occasionally profess for Moses and for the Prophets, it seems to have been uttered

* The inhabitants of Antioch had shewn their dislike to Julian by publishing an enigmatical device, which expressed that X. and K. by which was meant Christ and Constantius, had never injured the city. They also stigmatized the Emperor by the title of Victimarius. Ammianus intimates that circumstances alone compelled him to stifle his resentment. It was fortunate for Antioch that he did not return from Persia. Misopogon. p. 357, and Amm. Marcell. lib. xxii. c. 14. p. 256. et notas.

without any just apprehension of the nature and design of their institutions and precepts, or of the connection which subsisted between the two covenants.

The testimonies, however, in confirmation of truth, which it has pleased God to manifest by the writings and conduct of this, its determined adversary, are considerable. The principles, in which he had been early instructed, retained some influence on his mind; and hence, amidst the illusions of his mystical theology, are interspersed some observations of religious and moral importance, and some remnants of revealed knowledge. Thus he speaks of the "Creator" being "the common Father and King," and of "the excellency of the Divine nature *," which he represents as "rejoicing in the pure minds of pious men †," and "as holding out great hopes after death, in which they should have confidence ‡."

Many passages may be discovered, in the extracts from his works preserved by S. Cyril, which however intended, bear suffrage to the Jewish dispensation. He speaks of Moses and the Prophets, and other persons

* Cyril. Cont. Jul. 115. lib. iv. and v.

† Δογ. viii.

‡ Fragment Orat. p. 298. et Spanh. Præf.

among the Jews, as being inspired *; and he observes, that men omitted in his time to bring sacrifices to the altars, because fire did not descend from heaven, as in the days of Moses, to consume the victims †. But notwithstanding these passages, and though he assured the Jews, before his departure from Persia, that he would protect them, and join in their worship, it is probable that he was actuated in these professions, only by views of engaging them to unite in the project of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem. He may have regarded them with some favour on account of their custom of offering up sacrifices, and he certainly conspired with them in their hatred of the Christians; but he did not entertain any real respect for them, or just reverence for their sacred books; he expressly objects, indeed, to the election of the Jewish nation by God, considering them as inferior to other people ‡; and he derides the accounts of the creation, of the fall, and of the confusion of tongues; he detracts also from the excellency of the precepts of the law §.

There are many passages which tend to substantiate accounts in the New Testament.

* Cyril. Cont. Jul. l. 6. et 10.

† Ibid. l. x. ad Cyprian. Tert. l. ix.

‡ Cyril. L. 5. § L. 8—10.

He cites the four Evangelists by name, and the Acts of the Apostles, without any intimation against their authenticity, though he remarks on the difference between the genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and objects to the application of some of the prophecies, particularly of that in the second chapter of St. Matthew “out of Egypt have “I called my Son.” Cyril states him to have erroneously asserted that St. John alone of the disciples in speaking of Jesus, “who subjected spirits, walked upon the sea, and drove out demons,” represented him as “having made the heaven and the earth*.” He alludes to the enrolment under Cyrenius, mentioned by St. Luke, and to the conversion of Cornelius, and of Sergius Paulus. He speaks of St. Peter’s vision, and of the circular letter sent by the Apostles, of which there is an account in the Acts †, and he shews an acquaintance with the doctrine of the Atonement, since he admits that man had not any power of washing out his depravity, but that God found a purification by means of a body ‡; he, however, artfully represents the ablution imparted by Baptism, as holding out encouragement to sinners §.

* Cyril. l. vi. p. 213.

† Acts xv.

‡ Act. i. p. 39.

§ Cæsares, p. 336.

In speaking of Christ and his disciples, in the following passage quoted and exposed by Cyril, he betrays the blindness of his prejudices *.

“ But Jesus,” says he, addressing the Christians, “ having gained over a few of
 “ the worst among you, has been esteemed
 “ for about three hundred years, not having
 “ performed during the time that he lived
 “ with you, any action worthy of record,
 “ unless it should be thought a great work
 “ to cure the lame, and the blind, and to
 “ adjure dæmoniacs in the villages of Beth-
 “ saida and Bethany.”

In his epistles he pays a tribute to the virtue of the Galilæans, stating that they supported not only their own people, but the heathens; and he attempted to reform the pagan priesthood by recommending the observance of those restraints which the Christians practised. He endeavoured to effect the establishment of hospitals and monasteries, in imitation of their institutions, celebrating their humanity to strangers, their beneficence to the poor, their care of the sepulture of the dead, and the general sanctity of their manners †; admitting like-

* Cyril. cont. Julian. lib. vi. p. 191. Edit. Spanhem, Lips. 1696.

† Epist. xlix. ad Arsacium. Fragment. Orat. vel Epist. p. 305. Epist. xlix. p. 429. Apol. c. xxxix. Chronol. p. 41.

wise the extent of their success against the heathen system*, and the great persecutions which they had suffered under his predecessor †.

Julian in his vain attempt to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, in order to bring discredit on the predictions of the Jewish Prophets, and of our Saviour, only afforded occasion for an illustrious display of the miraculous interposition of God, who frustrated his long concerted and vigorous exertions, by eruptions of fire and other portentous circumstances, the evidence of which is supported by Heathen and Christian testimonies, as detailed with much learning by Warburton; who observes, that the attempt and failure of Julian are involved in one issue, and that to doubt of the attempt would be to subvert the foundations of human credit, and that we might as well dispute whether Cæsar was assaulted in the senate.

The fact is attested, not only by Heathen ‡ and Jewish § writers, but it appears to be confirmed in a fragment of an oration

* Epist. vii. p. 376.

† Epist. lii. p. 435.

‡ Ammianus Marcellinus.

§ R. Gedaliah ben Joseph, Hichija Schelschelah Hakkabala. Rab. D. Gans. ap. Wagens, p. 231.

or epistle of Julian himself, composed at Antioch, and published by Petavius, in which the Emperor seems covertly to allude to the circumstances which had frustrated his design, attempting to disparage the Jewish Prophets, or writers, as “men who mistook
 “ the ethereal splendour (of heaven) for an
 “ impure terrestrial fire, and who stark blind
 “ to all nature, working round them, roared
 “ out with frantic vehemence, ‘*fear and*
 “ *tremble, ye inhabitants of the earth, fire,*
 “ *lightning, the sword darts death,*’ and all
 “ the frightful words that express that one
 “ destructive property of fire. But of these
 “ things,” continues he, “it is more expedient to speak in private, where we may
 “ shew how much inferior these masters of
 “ wisdom, who pretend to be sent from
 “ God, are to our poets *.”

Warburton intimates, that this miraculous event was predicted by Isaiah, in a passage which must be allowed to be strikingly descriptive of its circumstances †, and which immediately follows a prophecy, generally admitted to relate to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus ‡. “Thou shalt be visited

* Warburton’s Julian, book i. p. 76. Juliani. Opera. Ed. Spanhem. p. 295.

† Ch. xxix. 6. vide also Ammianus Marcellinus, Socrates, Sozomen, &c.

‡ Ch. xxix. 3—5.

“ of the Lord of Hosts,” says the Prophet,
 “ with thunder and with earthquake, and
 “ great noise, with storm and tempest, and
 “ the flame of devouring fire.”

Lardner, though he admits that Julian designed to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, seems to doubt, whether he had commenced, or actually directed the attempt, and refers to a letter of the emperor to the community of the Jews, in which he promises, that on his return from the Persian war, he would rebuild the holy city*. The learned writer observes, that whether it were owing to miraculous interpositions, or to the circumstances of Julian's affairs, and to his defeat and death, that his design was never accomplished, the over-ruling providence of God ought to be acknowledged in the event; and the argument for the truth of the Christian religion, taken, from the fulfilment of our Saviour's predictions, in the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the Jewish people, and their continued dispersion, remains in all its force†.

The Jews had endeavoured to rebuild the temple in the reigns of Adrian and Constantine, “ reasons of state,” says Warburton, “ defeated the first, and of religion the second attempt.”

* Epist. xxv. p. 396.

† Lardner, test. ch. 46.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Pallas.

THERE are some scattered memorials of Grecian literature, which have been handed down under the names of obscure writers of uncertain date, and which exhibit an apparent imitation of passages in Scripture. The following epigram may be mentioned as a specimen; it goes under the name of Pallas, and seems to express a sentiment very similar to the fine reflection in Job *, but not equalling it in its solemn conclusion.

Γῆς ἐπέβην γυμνός, γυμνός θ' ὑπὸ γαῖαν ἄπειμα
 Καὶ τι μάτην μοχθῶ, γυμνὸν ὄρω τὸ τέλος.

It is thus translated in Carcani's collection, published at Naples. 1738.

* Job i. 21.

Son nella terra ignudo entrato, e ignudo
 Solo terra n'andrò, dunque all, invano
 Di che m'affanno, ignudo il fin vedendo.

A Raccolta di Vari. Epigram.

There are passages also which may serve to illustrate the superiority of sacred instructions over those of heathen morality. Solomon commands us to “cast our bread upon the water,” that is to scatter it where there is no hope of return, and assures us that we “shall find it after many days.” The learned Jubb has produced from Theognis* and Phocylides† passages in which it is said, that “to do good to unworthy and ungrateful persons is the same as to sow the ocean;” thus inverting, as Lowth has observed, the precept of the inspired writer, and exemplifying the Apophthegm :

Ista homines dicas, hoc posuisse Deum‡.

* Theog. γνῶμολ. v. 105.

† Phocyl. v. 142.

‡ See Eccles. xi. 1. and Lowth, Prælect. x. p. 121.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Preface to the Latin Classics.

BUT little of science can be supposed to have prevailed at Rome in the earlier periods of the republic. A love of military glory occupied the attention of a people struggling with difficulties, and engaged in perpetual warfare. In the interval of repose enjoyed by Numa, he instituted or regulated an order of priesthood, to which was entrusted the care of the public annals, and which recorded the oracular instructions by which the councils of the state were guided *. These and some songs of triumph †—some sketches of fable—some effusions of untutored eloquence which expressed in unaffected language the feelings of a brave and generous people, composed the chief memorials of the

* Dionys. Halicar. Edit. Oxon. lib. ii. § 73. p. 127.

† Spence's Polymetis. Dial. ii.

time. These productions, probably, were for the greater part destroyed when the city was taken by the Gauls, A. U. C. 360*.

A taste for literature and philosophy seems to have been first introduced from Greece. Livius Andronicus and Ennius began to promote attention to them about 510 years after the building of Rome, and about the same time L. Fabius Pictor and L. Cincius Alimentus wrote histories of the Roman affairs in Greek. Little, however, of what was really valuable has been preserved †; and though volumes of obsolete poetry remained till the time of Augustus, nothing was found in them of sufficient authority to establish any standard of language. The Latin, used under the regal government, and earlier periods of the consular power, was scarcely understood in the time of Cicero; and the changes and fluctuations, which took place when a taste for learning began to prevail, were so considerable, that the style employed two centuries before the Augustan

* Livii Historia, lib. vii. § 2, et Voss. de Histor. Latin. lib. i.

† Livy, lib. vii. c. 3. lib. xxi c. 38. Sueton. August. Macrob.

age, would at this time be scarcely intelligible, if we may judge from ancient inscriptions, which commentators have with difficulty explained*.

Literature, however, under the eager encouragement which it received, advanced rapidly to perfection.

By the appointment of Providence, the Augustan age, which was contemporary with that of Christ, was distinguished by an extraordinary constellation of writers, not only of orators, of poets, and of philosophers, (who, while they displayed the highest attainments of human reason, contributed to render the triumph of Christianity more conspicuous and honourable,) but likewise of historians, who recorded almost every circumstance which is calculated to illustrate the difficulties with which it had to contend. There can be little doubt that the remains of Pagan antiquity have been preserved by direction of God, with especial regard to a confirmation of the documents of Revelation: and every transcript of the history, institutions, customs, and opinions of former times, which has been transmitted to us, seems to

* Walton's Prolegom.

afford some tribute to a cause in which the interests of the world and the welfare of mankind are deeply concerned. Heathen testimonies, in support of the claims of religion, appear to multiply towards the time at which the Gospel was promulgated, and when the diffusion of its light generally mingled with the discoveries of human knowledge. Important memorials, which afford abundant evidence, exist in works familiar and accessible to all ; and it is necessary only to exercise restraint in selecting those which are most entitled to attention, or which best concur with the design of the present work.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Marcus Porcius Cato.

IN the time of Cicero, no Latin work in prose, worthy to be read, could be found more ancient than the writings of Marcus Porcius Cato. This eminent man was born A. U. C. 530, that is 223 years before Christ. In the intervals of his public employments, particularly in his declining years, after great military services, he devoted himself to literature, and derived instruction in Greek learning from Ennius*, who seems to have been born at Rudii, in Calabria, about 16 years before Cato, and to have been brought by him to Rome.

Some historical and military works, and some orations of Cato have perished †. A

* Aurelius Victor, c. 47. Cicero Cato Major, c. i. Cornel. Nepos Vit. Cato, l. i. et de Illust. Grammat. l. i. Some fragments of Ennius were collected by the Stephens's, and published by Hieron Columna at Naples, in 1590.

† Plin. 29. i. Voss. de Hist. Latin. l. 1. Quintil. 12. iii.

production upon agriculture alone remains entire. In it he details the economy and management of a farm, but carries the spirit of parsimony to such a degree of rigour, as must offend the feelings of every Christian reader, since he recommends that the servant worn out by age and disease should be sold; Plutarch, whose humanity was possibly improved by the spirit which was generally diffused by the promulgation of the Gospel, justly reprobates the harsh instruction and conduct of Cato; and Pliny and Seneca give very different lessons*.

A few doubtful fragments †, under the authority of Cato, are still extant. The moral distiches, which go under his name, and which have often been considered as ancient productions, appear to have been composed by some Christian writer, and as some suppose, in a barbarous age. They contain passages borrowed from Ecclesiastes, if not from the Gospel ‡. Scaliger seems inclined to ascribe them to Ausonius, who was converted to Christianity, but con-

* Plin. lib. viii. epist. 16. Sen. de Benef. lib. iii. c. 18-28. See also Job xxxi. 13. Juvenal Sat. 6. L. 217.

† Servius ad Georgic. L. 2.

‡ Vide First Distich.

ceives that they betray some vestiges of heathen error—an opinion which Boxhorn disputes*.

The son of Cato published some commentaries on the civil law, and his grandson some orations†.

* Question. Roman.

† Aulus Gellius, lib. xiii. c. 19.

CHAP. XL.

Publius Accius Plautus.

THE dramatic writers were probably among the authors who first attracted the attention of Rome. Scenic representations originated in Etruria, in rustic songs modulated by simple instruments, which were afterwards changed into fescennine satires, and artificial dialogues*, Livius Andronicus is said to have attempted the first regular fable or argument of a drama. It appeared A. U. C. 514, and was considered by Cicero as not deserving to be read †.

Livius was followed by Nævius ‡ and by Ennius, who translated some Greek plays. These, and other writers, of whom some me-

* Valerius Maxim. lib. ii. c. 4, § 1. 4. 6. and Horat. lib. ii. epist. i. l. 154.

† De clar. orat. § 71.

‡ Vossius de Hist. Lat. lib. i. c. 2. and Cicero in Brut. § 13.

morials are preserved, flourished before Plautus, and laid the foundation of the drama, which afterwards was cultivated with great ardour at Rome, and which was combined with theatric decorations. Livy describes them as imposing an expence scarcely to be borne even by opulent nations, they were regarded however as religious institutions, necessary to please and pacify the gods, and beneficial to the instruction of men*.

Plautus lived about the conclusion of the second Punic war, when the Romans began to enjoy some respite. He was a native of Sarsina, a town of Umbria, of low birth and humble circumstances, deriving support from his industry, as well as from his talents. His death is placed about the year of Rome 570, that is 183 years before the Christian æra.

One hundred and thirty plays, said to be composed by Plautus, were carried about in the time of Varro, of which that writer considered twenty-one as genuine†, and of these, twenty still remain. They were favourably received at the time at which they

* Livy, lib. vii. § 2.

† Aulus Gellius, Noct. Att. lib. iii. c. 3.

were produced, and in which Cato lived, and they afford therefore a specimen of what that eminent man, when censor, “did not disdain to hear.” Cicero seems to speak in commendation of the wit and pleasantry with which they abound*, as polite and ingenious; but Horace, with more refined taste, thought that the humour of Plautus was too patiently endured by his rude forefathers†: it is certainly not always such as strict judgment can approve. The plays, however, maintained their reputation on the stage for a long time, and were performed even in the reign of Dioclesian. They are sometimes pleasing and simple in their contrivance, but often of a low and indelicate cast, adapted to the vulgar classes of society; and though written with a purity of Latin, which is particularly commended by Varro, they must be allowed to have a tendency to vitiate the taste, if not to weaken the impressions of virtue.

There are, however, passages in these plays favourable to morality. In the *Persæ* it is observed, that Athens would be well

* De Officiis, lib. i. § 29.

† Art. Poet. l. 270.

fortified, if perfidy, peculation, avarice, ambition, slander, injury, idleness, and other vices were banished, and that unless these were driven out, no fortifications would avail. “Hæc nisi inde aberunt, centuplex murus rebus servandis parum est*.”

Various passions, also, are often well exposed, and some sketches of character are drawn, which have been happily imitated in modern times. It is known that Joseph Bermeister framed a sacred drama after the model of the *Asinaria*, on the argument of Saul’s requiring a bloody dowry of David, to be obtained from the Philistines, for the possession of his daughter Michal†: and that Moliere borrowed his character of the Miser from the *Euclio* of the *Aulularia*.

The representations, which Plautus gives of the Deities worshipped by the vulgar in his time, sufficiently prove‡, that it was not deemed inconsistent with the popular theology to describe them as subject to those frailties and vices which attach a disgrace on the human character. In the *Amphi-*

* Act 4. Scene 4.

† 1 Sam. xviii. 25.

‡ Aul. Gell. iii. 3.

tryon, Jupiter is introduced as exerting his divine power for the purposes of effecting the most flagrant crimes: and in the Carthaginian, Lycus professes to have defrauded Venus of a sacrifice, upon being informed by the priest that the entrails consulted were not auspicious to his profligate designs, avowing his determination to make the gods and goddesses more moderate in their expectations.

Varro, however, appears to have considered the theology of the stage as peculiarly fabulous. The deities thereon represented being designed, probably, as a kind of dramatic machinery, in which many circumstances were feigned contrary to the real nature and dignity * ascribed to them.

Plautus, in some instances, distinguished between Jupiter, and the other deities, and he clearly speaks of one God, who is characterized by the attribute of omniscience.

“ Est profecto Deus, qui, quæ nos gerimus, auditque
“ et videt †.”

In the *Rudens* also he asserts the supre-

* Vide Cudworth's *Intell. Syst.* book i. c. iv.

† Plaut. *Capt.* act 2. scene 2.

macy of one sovereign and imperial Lord, by whom the subordinate Gods are appointed over the earth, to examine the actions and manners of men, and to whom they report the recorded names of those who bear false testimony or who perjure themselves.

“ Qui est Imperator Divûm atque Hominum, Jupiter,
Is nos per gentis alium aliâ disparat,
Hominum qui facta, mores, pietatem et fidem,
Noseamus.”——

“ Qui falsas lites falsis testimoniis
Petunt, quique in jure abjurant pecuniam,
Eorum referimus nomina exscripta ad Jovem*.”

Upon these persons, the Deity again exercises judgment, and causes the good to be registered anew in other tablets; but the wicked who think that they can appease him by gifts and victims, lose their labour and cost, since nothing is acceptable to him from perjured men.

In his “Pænulus,” or “The Carthaginian,” Plautus introduces Hanno†, thus supplicating the supreme Jupiter.

“ O thou, who preservest and nourishest
“ the race of men, by whom we exist, on

* Prolog. in Rudentem. P. 336. Edit. Amstel.

† Pæn. Act 5. scene 4.

“ whom the hopes, the lives, of all men depend ; Grant, I implore thee, that this day may be prosperous to my affairs.”

In the same play *, Hanno having addressed the tutelary deities of the country of Calydon in Ætolia, (where he is represented to arrive as a stranger,) entreating them to favour the recovery of his two daughters, who had been taken away by pirates, afterwards †, in an ejaculation, invokes the great Lord of heaven and earth by the name of Baal (Balsamen or Beelsamen). The Carthaginians were descended from the Phœnicians, who worshipped Baal, and many of their distinguished men assumed the title of Baal, in addition to their names, as Hannibal the greatest lord, Asdrubal the mighty lord, and others ‡.

It is remarkable, that the sixteen first verses of the fifth act of the *Pænulus*, containing the prayer addressed by Hanno to the tutelary deities, are written in the Punic language ; or as Bochart § maintains, the ten first are written in Punic, and the six last

* *Pœn.* Act 5. scene 1.

† Act 5. scene 2.

‡ Selden, *Titles of Honour.* Vol. iii. p. 933—950.

§ Bochart *Chanaan*, l. 2. c. 6.

in Lybian; both of which dialects the Carthaginians used, and were thereby called “Bilingues” and “Bisulcilinguæ.” Bochart has expressed the first ten lines in Hebrew characters, (being as he conceives, in meaning the same as the six last) with a view to ascertain how far the Hebrew and Punic dialects corresponded with, or differed from, each other; and by this means he extracts the sense of the Punic, from the corresponding Hebrew words, sufficiently in agreement with that which Plautus himself has given of the same words. It should be observed, that the Punic words in Plautus were originally written, according to the Commentators, without vowels, which afterwards were inserted by some officious copyists. If the ruins of Carthage should ever be explored, as they well deserve to be *, it is not impossible that some important memorials of the Punic language may be discovered.

* Bochart Chanaan, lib. ii. c. 6.

CHAP. XLI.

Publius Terentius.

TERENCE was born at Carthage, ten years after the conclusion of the second Punic war, 192 years before the birth of Christ, when the Romans enjoyed some leisure and repose. He was brought as a slave to Rome, but was soon liberated, and so distinguished himself as to be admitted to the friendship of Scipio and Lælius, in whose houses he acquired that pure and polite style of familiar dialogue, for which he is justly admired.

Five of the six plays of Terence which remain, are borrowed, as to their subject, from the Grecian stage. It will not be expected that they afford much which bears any reference to the design of the present work.

It has already been remarked, that the law which directed the nearest of kin to

marry the widow of a deceased person, and which is represented by Terence to have prevailed at Athens, was probably derived from the Mosaic precept* upon this subject, though the motive for the original appointment of the law, had an exclusive relation to the Jewish people, as intended to keep up the distinction of their tribes, with a view to the fulfilment of prophecy.

There are passages in Terence, with respect to the superior efficacy of the prayers of good men †, and the futility of babbling repetitions ‡ in the expression of gratitude towards the gods, which indicate right apprehensions of the attributes of the Divine nature, and in which the author derides a practice that is a subject of censure to the Sacred Writers.

The Plays of Terence, composed with elaborate skill, on the designs of Menander, exhibit the characters of human life, and delineate the passions of men, with the most lively and pleasing expressions of nature.

* Deut. xxv. 3. 5. and the book of Ruth.

† Psalm lxvi. 18. Ibid. xxxiv. 16. Isaiah i. 15. See also Grotius on John ix. 31.

‡ Heaut. Act 5. scene i. line 6. Grotius on Matt. vi. 7.

They contain sentiments of great beauty, and often interest the feelings by an amiable and benevolent turn of thought, they are written also with a native and playful pleasantry, expressed with a peculiar terseness and purity of language. But however calculated to excite a correct taste, they have a dangerous tendency as to their moral effect; free in general from indelicacy of expression, they are not free from impurity of subject, and veil great profligacy of conduct under ingenious palliation and secular excuses, and it requires all the rectitude and probity of the Christian principle, to correct the influence of those representations which have a tendency to injure the mind, and to which it ought not to be familiarized, especially before the judgment is matured. Luther is related, indeed, to have read them twice in two months*, but as Grotius has observed, “*alia legimus in his pueri, alia viri* †.”

A conviction that much prejudice would result from the use of them in the early periods of youth, led Hieronymus Freyerus

* B. Faber. ad Synonym Terent.

† Morhosii Polyhist. l. iii. c. 9. § 29. p. 665.

to publish his *Colloquia Terentiana*, with some extracts from Plautus and Phædrus, free from exceptionable circumstances*. The same persuasion induced, at an earlier period, Cornelius Sconæus Gaudanus, who was a principal of a college at Haerlem, to write his *Terentius Christianus* †, a work composed in imitation of the style of Terence, whose genius he had particularly studied, and which is free from many of the objections to which the classic plays are liable. The author thus speaks of his production :

“ Non hic amore demens adolescentulus
 Pudenda coram jactitabit crimina ;
 Nec fabulosus quispiam Deus, viri
 Mentitus formam, amantem fallet conjugem ;
 Nec servus argento emunget senem ‡.”

The subjects of these plays are drawn from the sacred books, and from those of the Apocrypha, but the Plays are not written in the prophane and ludicrous style in which the personages and events of sacred history

* Hale, Saxon, 1714.

† Published at Cologne in 1604; see Rollin, *Belles Lettres*, vol. i. p. 199.

‡ Præf. in *Tobæum*.

were treated by dramatic writers a little before the period of the Reformation. Still, however, the tendency of even these productions is questionable, and the Patriarchs and Prophets of Scripture lose much of their original simplicity and dignity, when divested of their sacred character, and exhibited under the capricious and varying representations of modern taste.

CHAP. XLII.

Titus Carus Lucretius.

LUCRETIVS appears to have been born of a distinguished family at Rome, A.U. 650, about one hundred years before the time of Christ. He is said to have been educated at Athens, under Zeno the Sidonian, and Phædrus, both leaders of the Epicurean sect. He seems to have imbibed a spirit of infidelity which carried him far beyond the principles of Epicurus, and prompted him to dispute the Providence of God, and the immortality of the soul. He illustrated, however, the extravagance of his opinions, as well by the unhappy termination of his life, as by the fallacious arguments with which he endeavoured to propagate them, having put a period to his own existence, at the age of forty-three*, rushing prematurely, it has

* Euseb. et Prosper. Chron.

been observed, on that immortality which he had unhappily treated with derision.

Some represent Lucretius to have been insane, and Eusebius states that his poem was written during the lucid intervals of his disorder, when, notwithstanding occasional derangement of intellect, he uttered the effusions of poetry with much animation, an account similar to what Thuanus gives of Tasso *.

The work, though decorated with uncommon display of imagery, is founded on a ground of false and illusive argument. It exhibits an exposition of the system of Epicurus, with some principles of the Atomick philosophy, which had been previously promulgated by Empedocles and Democritus, and which were not inconsistent with a belief in the agency of a supreme Being, and the existence of an eternal nature in the soul.

The principles of Epicurus, which had been taught at Athens, above 280 years before the birth of Christ, were first introduced to the notice of the Romans by Cyneas, who accompanied Pyrrhus when he landed in

* Qui insanabili in adolescentia furore correptus cum in Ferrariensi aula degeret. Thuani Hist. lib. cxiii. p. 503. Edit. Buckley.

Italy*, and who propounded them to Fabricius at an entertainment given to him as ambassador from the Romans to Pyrrhus, A. U. 472. These principles were likely to take deep root in the luxurious city of Tarentum, where Pyrrhus had arrived as an ally, Fabricius on hearing them, exclaimed, that he hoped they would be maintained by him and the Samnites while they were at enmity with Rome. It was greatly to be regretted, that they should be inculcated among the Romans, who at that time were worthy to be represented by Fabricius, and were distinguished for great virtues; this appeared upon an occasion mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who informs us, that about ten years before, an act of licentiousness, committed by C. Lætorius Mercus, was resented as “an injury to the common-
“ wealth †;” Mercus, though a man of birth and military character, being on that account condemned to death by the general voice of the people. The same spirit ap-

* Plutarch. ΠΑΡΑΛ. ΠΥΡΡΟΣ, vol. 2. p. 459. Edit. Tonson. 1723.

† Κοινὸν Ἀδίκημα τῆς πόλεως.

peared not long before in a similar instance recorded by the same historian *.

As the stern virtues of the Romans relaxed on the full establishment of their prosperity, and the spirit of indulgence began to prevail, instructions favourable to a love of ease and pleasure, and tending to release men from the apprehensions of divine wrath, naturally gained ground †. Epicurus, though his opinions led to atheism, affected not to deny the existence of gods, but only the monarchy of the Supreme Being, and pretended to admit a multitude of eternal deities self-existing. Blindly affirming, that the nature of things was not created by a Divine mind, he refused to acknowledge the gods as creators or governors of the world, representing, it should seem, that the composure and felicity of their indolent nature would be disturbed by attention to earthly concerns ‡.

Epicurus attributed the formation of this material frame of things to a fortuitous combination of atoms, supposed to have existed from eternity, conceiving that “out of no-

* Dion. Hal. excerpta quædam, vol. i. p. 709. Edit. Oxon.

† Juvenal, Sat. xiii. l. 122. Persii, Sat. iii. l. 84. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xix. c. 4.

‡ Lib. i. l. 51—62. Cudworth, b. i. c. 3, 4.

“ thing, nothing could be created.” Lucretius having adopted this vague and visionary theory, endeavoured to get rid of the belief in a great Creator, and original Mover of the world, by having recourse to secondary causes. As he lived at a time when the Greek philosophy had made but inconsiderable progress at Rome, he laboured to recommend his novel principles by variety of ornament, drawing his illustrations from every department of nature, and amusing the mind with allusions to various objects, and with arguments of analogy rather apparent than real.

Having combated the doctrines of Providence, and of the immortality of the soul, Lucretius judged it necessary to soften the shock of his impiety by sentiments of moral impression, inculcating by tardy precept a subjection of passions which he had, by licentious poetry, inflamed; and exhorting to a contempt of death, after having derided the hope of a future state of reward. Having in the spirit of a vain and presumptuous writer, ascribed the origin of things to the operation of natural causes, and pretended to account for the existence, production, and renewal of bodies by a me-

chanical process, without admitting the operation of any agent to direct them, he exults, as if he had liberated the mind from a slavish fear; and boasts, of having triumphed over religion, which, as it implied the superstitions of the Heathen world, he might justly describe as having been the cause of many wicked and atrocious actions, affording another confession to the deficiency of every system which had been revered before the publication of the Gospel.

Lucretius, however, seems constrained to bear some testimonies to truth, he admits the recent formation of the world *, and its future destruction in one day †. He depicts the chaotic state of all things at the first ‡, and details the order in which every thing was produced from the earth, agreeably upon the whole, to the Mosaic account §. He allows, inconsistently with the general course of his argument in the third book, the origin of man from the ground, made fruitful by a celestial parent; the restoration of his material part to the earth,

* Lib. v. l. 331—380.

† Lib. v. l. 96.

‡ Lib. v. l. 433, et seq.

§ Lib. v. l. 450, et seq. 781. compare with Gen. i.

from whence it sprung, and of his ethereal part. to the heavens; considering death as the dissolution, and not the annihilation of man*, and representing the mind as ardent to soar into the regions of infinite space†. He speaks of an original state of things, in which piety prevailed, and the earth brought forth spontaneously that produce, which it now scarcely yields to labour‡, bearing thorns, and to be subdued with difficulty, describing what might seem to refer to the operation of the curse pronounced at the Fall§. He points out the proofs of an innate corruption of human nature, appearing in men who, “notwithstanding they possess
 “every thing necessary for their support and
 “security, though they abound in riches, in
 “honours, and in reputation, and behold their
 “children distinguished, yet still are full of
 “anxiety, and their minds are disposed to
 “complain; so that it is evident that some
 “inherent evil has affected the very nature of
 “man, and that every thing conferred upon
 “him is corrupted’ by some inward vice, and

* Lib. ii. l. 990, et seq.

† Lib. ii. l. 1045, et seq.

‡ Lib. ii. l. 1156, et sequen. ad. fin.

§ Lib. v. l. 207, and Gen. iii. 17.

“ therefore as in a vessel injured by a secret
 “ fissure, or tainted by some infection, every
 “ thing insensibly flows away or is spoilt*.”

He mentions the longevity of man †, in the early ages of the world ; and alludes to the deluge ‡, and to a destruction of men by fire §. He confesses that men in his time were every where wandering in quest of the way of life, in darkness and danger ||, forming false judgments of things, like children, whom their fancies terrify in the night ¶. These suffrages are the more remarkable, as being found in a work strongly characterized by hostility to all religion.

The vanity and danger of indulging a spirit of infidelity have been shewn in the fate of Lucretius: and it is not undeserving of remark, that Creech, the translator of Lucretius, terminated also his life at an early period by suicide. It does not, indeed, appear that he had adopted any principles of materialism, and he often exposes the falla-

* Lib. vi. l. 9—22. See also lib. v. l. 1122-3, and Horace's Epist. ii. l. 13—16.

† Lib. v. l. 929.

‡ Lib. v. l. 342—396—416.

§ Lib. v. l. 395. 397. and Gen. xix. 24.

|| Lib. ii. l. 10—16.

¶ Lib. ii. l. 54.

cious arguments which he contributed to circulate: but it is not improbable that a prejudicial effect was produced by the false notions of the poet on the mind of the translator, naturally disposed as it was, to a sullen conceit and impatience of controul: he confesses indeed to have dwelt with unbecoming pleasure on the wanton descriptions of Lucretius. Certain it is, that by publishing his translation at a period when the nation was just awakened from the effects of the fanatical spirit, by which it had been hurried into the most mischievous excesses, and when it was disposed to follow the corrupt and superficial men who presided over the literature and society of the time, into all the delusions of error, he contributed to support the cause of infidelity. There can be little doubt that many caught eagerly at the absurd principles of the Epicurean philosophy, agreeable as they were to some theories propagated by Descartes and other foreign writers; and hence it was that his translation, tedious and insipid as it often is, was extolled as a work of considerable genius, and the author flattered far beyond his pretensions to praise.

The extravagant theory of Lucretius,

however animated by the spirit of the original poetry, was incapable of bearing critical examination. Many writers in this and other countries have refuted its fallacies, as Cardinal de Polignac, Thomas Cave, and others; among whom Henry More * and Richard Blackmore should be particularly mentioned, the former for his work on the Immortality of the Soul; and the latter for his Poem on the Creation, which is now too much neglected, though it justly obtained the praise of Addison; and likewise of Johnson, who seems to assent to the testimony of Dennis, when he describes it as “a philosophical poem which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its versification, and infinitely surpassed it in the solidity and strength of its reasoning.”

* Cambridge, 1647.

CHAP. XLIII.

Marcus Tullius Cicero.

CICERO, if contemplated as an orator, a statesman, and a philosopher, must be regarded as the most accomplished character in the annals of Rome. He flourished at a period when every distinction which he displayed was heightened by competition with men of considerable eminence; and while his eloquence rivalled that of Greece, at its most illustrious periods, and his political talents defended the safety and liberties of his country, he found leisure to cultivate literature and philosophy to an extent far beyond what his contemporaries had effected, and has interested all ages by the description of the retreats in which he enjoyed the leisure and repose of domestic and social life.

Cicero was considered as having alone manifested a greatness correspondent to the dignity of the Roman empire. He was born

at Arpinum, in the 647th year of Rome, 106 years before Christ. He is by some described as having derived his descent from a noble and even royal ancestry * among the Volsci, whilst others represent him to have been born of a family of equestrian rank at Rome. He appears to have studied under Molo at Rome and at Rhodes, and under other eminent men at Athens and in Asia, conversing with the leaders of the chief sects. At Athens he was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, which are supposed by Warburton to have been designed to impress the mind with a conviction of the unity of God, and of the immortality of the soul †.

Cicero exerted his great talents principally at Rome, but he presided with distinguished probity over a part of Sicily and in Cilicia. We cannot with Quintilian consider the character of Cicero as having illustrated every virtue; and contemplating it under the different points of view before referred to, we must admit many defects. He lived, however, in times of peculiar difficulty, when the fac-

* Heinsius not. ad. Sil. Ital. l. viii. v. 407. Prosper. Chron. p. 679.

† Divin. Legat. vol. i.

tious and licentious spirit of the people introduced every embarrassment, and exposed the state to every danger.

It has been observed, that this great orator, in the spirit of a professional declaimer, sometimes defended causes which his own judgment condemned, and sacrificed the principles of justice to favour and popularity. In general, however, he directed his abilities to the exposure of public delinquents, and to the protection of men who justified his able support. As a statesman, eminent for patriotism and probity, he betrayed some inconsistency and indecision, at an important crisis, when called upon to take an active part against Cæsar, but we must remember, that he was actuated by a desire of reconciling the contending parties, and of sparing (as he declared to Cassius *) the effusion of human blood, a motive indeed highly honourable. After the establishment of Cæsar's power, he departed, perhaps, somewhat from the dignity of his character, and admitted too easily a spirit of despondence and of self-indulgence; nevertheless, when shut out from the course of his former glory, he exerted

* Epist. vii. l. 69.

the activity of his mind in composing the noblest works: and when the usurper was destroyed, he alone seems to have acted with such energy in directing the councils of the Senate, that if the public liberty could have been restored or preserved, amidst a dissolute and degenerate people, it would have been effected by the measures which he prescribed *.

In the record of his own actions, Cicero somewhat diminished their impression by an appearance of vanity, but no man more liberally allowed the claims of others. In his most confidential correspondence with intimate friends, he was sometimes guilty of a dissimulation unworthy of his character; he even expressed a wish that truth should be sacrificed in his favour †; and by too easily relinquishing the connections of human life, he subjected himself to merited censure; but on a full estimate of his worth we must admit that he was entitled to the highest admiration, and must confess, that a greater disgrace could not have fallen upon his

* Middleton's Life of Cicero.

† See his Letters translated by Melmoth, book v. Ep. 12. and notes. See also Epist. to Atticus vi. 6. ad Fam. 8. 6. 2. 15. de Clar. Orator. 1. ad App. Pulch. 1. 1—5.

country than that such a patriot should have become a victim to the unprincipled views of the ambitious men, whose designs he opposed. He closed a course of eminent services to his country and to mankind, by a death, at which it has been observed that eloquence and the republic expired, and which wanted only the composure of Christian resignation to dignify its circumstances, and the assurance of immortality to animate its hopes.

On reflecting that this great man was assassinated only forty-three years before the birth of Christ, we should feel, if not restrained by the conviction, that what has been decreed by Providence is best, some regret, that he was not permitted to hear the Gospel proclaimed. He seemed sometimes almost to anticipate its spirit and its precepts. In pleading to Cæsar in the hour of the dictator's successful ambition, he observed to him, that " he had received nothing from fortune, equal to the power of sparing the lives of men, and nothing better from nature, than the will so to do * ;" and in the Tusculan disputations we find him inculcating a noble

* Orat. pro Ligario. sub finem.

contempt of death, without having received the communications which teach the Christian to triumph over its terrors.

Luther, in speaking of the grounds of hope with respect to the salvation of this great philosopher, after a testimony to his wisdom and diligence, expresses his trust that God would be propitious to him * and to others like him ; though he judiciously adds, “ we ought not to affirm or determine, for certain, but to remain within the limits of the revealed word ; ‘ whosoever shall believe, and be baptized, shall be saved.’ ”

Erasmus goes farther and says, that what might be the case with others he knew not ; but that when he read Tully, he was so affected by his writings, particularly when he discoursed concerning a good life, that he could not doubt that the breast whence they proceeded was possessed by some divine power †.

The life and the writings of this eminent man certainly demonstrate some of the best effects of heathen philosophy, of which he improved the spirit and the instruction to a per-

* In Convivial, 714. Et Fabric.

† Prefat. in Tuscul. Quæst. ad Joan Ulattenum,

fection, which rendered his morality more deserving, than that of any other Roman, of being brought into comparison with the morality of the Gospel, in order that the inferiority of human wisdom may be acknowledged, when its noblest efforts are examined by the light of revelation. The example of Cicero was so conspicuously displayed, and his works were so well known, in Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor, but a few years before Christianity was promulgated, that they must have contributed in some degree to open and improve the minds of men for the reception of what was perfectly just and good.

A considerable number of the writings of Cicero has been happily preserved, and some additional fragments of his orations have been recently discovered. His works afford not only invaluable treasures of eloquence and wisdom, but also some indirect homage to the cause of sacred truth, while they expose the vanity of heathen superstition, and the errors of heathen philosophy. They offer also the tribute of reason and experience to many of the principles which religion has consecrated, and in some particulars they illustrate the sacred accounts.

Cicero exercised great freedom of enquiry,

and was disposed to embrace truth wherever it could be found. He appears to have inclined to the opinions of Plato. In the work *De Finibus*, which being somewhat deficient in the interest usually excited by the manner, in which he treats his subjects, is less read than his other productions, he considers the question concerning the chief good and evil, as they affect man, and refutes the opinions of the Epicureans, and Stoics, stating also with considerable precision, those of the Peripatetics. The acute and intelligent mind of Cicero could not but discern the errors of his predecessors in philosophy, and the absurdities of the Pagan theology and institutions, though he was unable entirely to liberate his judgment from the influence of the superstition which every where surrounded him *. He was admitted to the college of the augurs, but subverted the pretensions of the soothsayers of his time, though he allowed the divine origin of prophecy. From that respect for the established constitutions of his country †, which the most intelligent heathens were always anxious to maintain :

* *De Divinat.*

† *Lactantius de vera Sapient. l. iv. c. 28. August. de Civit. Dei. l. iv. c. 30. and Cudworth.*

and perhaps from subjection to the power of habit, he preserved a conformity to public ordinances, but he nevertheless combated vulgar errors and popular idolatry with much force. He considered the fictitious deities, who were worshipped as subordinate and tutelary gods, subject to the supreme Divinity, as representations framed in consistency with physical and useful truths; and ridiculed the folly of those, who described them as invested with human frailty, and impelled by human passions.

In his work *De Natura Deorum*, Cicero so steadily exposed the vanity of many existing superstitions, that according to the opinion of Arnobius *, his works were considered as favourable to Christianity, and those who opposed its progress contended for their suppression. Vossius indeed, and other writers, have considered Cicero and Xenophon as professing nearly the same faith with that of Abraham †. There can be little doubt that he entertained a firm conviction of the truth of the great principles of natural religion, particularly of the existence

* L. xxiii. p. 103, 104.

† Hist. Pelagiana, iii. 3. p. 383.

of the Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul. It must be admitted, indeed, that agreeably to the custom of the academies, he sometimes spoke upon these points with reserve, and an appearance of hesitation, but this was from a reluctance to dogmatise, and from a wish to observe that moderation which is favourable to the investigation of truth. He oftentimes also ascribes to different speakers opinions not approved by himself. Upon some occasions, and particularly in moments of dejection, those doubts which could not but be expected to prevail in times of heathen darkness, mingled their gloom with his persuasions, and made him appear to waver when he did not relinquish his convictions. He declared, indeed, that he would not forsake his grounds of confidence upon these points, considering religion as being more important to a city than its walls; "*quæ deseri a me dum quidem spirare potero, nefas judico* *." His sentiments are most explicitly avowed in his later writings.

With respect to the existence of the Supreme Being, though he often expresses the Divine Nature, under the term Gods, he ap-

* De Nat. Deor. lib. iii. c. 40. p. 513.

pears to have believed that there was one principal God, either the Creator of all things, (if as Plato supposed they were produced) or the Moderator of all things (if as Aristotle imagined they were eternal *): and that this Governor presided over the universe, as the human mind presides over the body, being the mover and projector of all things †. He argues from the consent of all nations, from the beauty of the world, and from the order of the celestial bodies, that there is a supreme and excellent nature, distinguished by divine attributes, to be looked up to and adored by men ‡; ■ Being who extends a providential care to all, having a particular respect to man, and regulating subordinate parts of the creation by general laws of government §, in conformity to whose eternal and universal rule all nations should be subject, as obedient to the master and imperial Lord of all ||.

* De Natura Deorum, lib. iii. § 3. p. 490. Edit. Olivet. Paris, 742. lib. ii. § 62. p. 484. lib. ii. § 38. p. 465.

† Somnium Scipionis, § 3. See also Orat. in Catil. 3. § 9. de Legib. lib. iii. § 1.

‡ De Divin. lib. ii. De Harusp. respons. § 9. p. 402. de Nat. Deor. § 4. p. 491. de Finib. liv. iv. § 5. p. 172.

§ De Natur. Deor. lib. i. § 44. p. 434. lib. ii. § 66. p. 487. lib. iii. § 36. p. 515. lib. i. § 2. p. 398.

|| Fragment de repub. v. iii. p. 387. Edit. Olivet. et Spence. Polymet. Dial. vi.

His conviction with respect to the immortality of the soul, was equally strong*, though it seems to have been embarrassed with some erroneous notions of the soul's pre-existence; and of such advancement made by it in knowledge, before it entered the body, as facilitated the attainment of science, which he considers as being a reminiscence or revival of the knowledge possessed in a former state. He insists, however, upon the eternal nature of the soul, as demonstrated by its ardour for immortality, and by its high faculties, its powers of motion, of recollection, and of foresight†. He considers it as having been constrained to forsake its native seat, and been subjected to an earthly prison; and he refers to the opinion of the antients, which supposed that we were born in this world of error and misery to undergo punishment for crimes committed in a former state‡. He represents men

* De Senect. § 21 et 23. comp. with 1 Cor. xv. 32. de Amicit. § 4. 327. Epist. lib. viii. Epist. 20. and Melmoth's Notes ad Famil. ix. 14. xv. 4. vi. 4. iv. 9. ad Attic. 188.

† Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i. § 23—28. p. 251.

‡ Cicero in Hortens. ap. S. August. cont. Pelag. lib. iv. c. 15. § 78. Edit. Benedict.

as intelligent beings, invested with an external form, that they may contemplate the heavenly bodies, and imitate by their moral conduct the order and uniformity which is to be admired in their course: thus subscribing to the opinion of Pythagoras, which has been deemed consistent with the Mosaic account, that the human soul is an emanation from the universal mind of the world, but existing with a distinct and individual character. In his *Essay on Old Age*, one of his later productions, in which he professes to deliver his own sentiments under a feigned character, he represents Cato as anticipating in a rapturous exclamation, which has been much admired, an escape from this earthly scene, and an admission to the divine assembly of departed spirits; where he should rejoin his beloved son, from whom he hoped to be no more separated*.

In speaking of a state of future rewards and punishments, Cicero expresses himself with respect to them in a manner, which, though consistent with full conviction as to a point upon which, as he observes, there can be no reasonable doubt if the mind be

* *De Senect. Sub finem*, p. 322.

not overpowered by the excessive brightness of the truth, as the eye is blinded by the sun *, yet notwithstanding indicates less apparent confidence than is shewn by other Heathen writers. He appears to have considered the popular apprehensions upon the subject as merely salutary inventions, contrived to overawe the wicked, and as being objectionable so far as they were conceived to be vindictive, and therefore, (as he deemed), incompatible with the attributes of the Supreme Being †. In one passage of his work he seems to intimate a persuasion that the soul would either be extinguished or admitted to the enjoyment of eternal happiness. Nevertheless, it is sufficiently evident, that he did not mean to deny the infliction of corrective punishments in this life, and the distinction to take place hereafter; but he occasionally betrays the vacillations and uncertainty of Heathen ignorance; and hence, perhaps, it is that he insists so little upon these points; and that even in the interesting work upon Old Age, though he includes the retro-

* Tusc. Quæst. § 30. p. 258.

† Tusculan disputat, and Olivet Entretiens de Cicéron sur la nature des Dieux.

spect of a well spent life as amidst its satisfactions, he does not appear to rest his hopes sufficiently upon the approbation of a supreme Being. He describes the enjoyment to be derived from a reasonable exercise of the faculties, and a useful employment of time, but he does not open any sources of consolation to those who experience the failure and decay, which deprive them of the power of application, which deaden the organs of sense, and cut off the means of social intercourse. He does not show how life may be rendered valuable to its possessor, under all circumstances, till its last hour*. To such knowledge Cicero had not attained.

Upon every subject of law and government, upon the relative and social duties of life, and upon the diversified scenes of nature, the works of this distinguished moralist abound with the most sublime and beautiful instruction, calculated to enlarge and ennoble the mind, and to elevate it to a contemplation of the ordinances of God, and of those attributes, which even unenlightened reason

* See also Ep. ad M. Marium. l. viii. Ep. 1.

could discover*. They shew also great depth of philosophical remark.

In the book of Offices, which contains a complete system of Heathen Ethics, Cicero has shewn what could be effected by human reason in discovering and defining the laws of morality, and in directing them to a practical application.

This work was not only one of the most useful productions which appeared before the publication of the Gospel, but it has been judged well calculated to illustrate the consistency of those duties which reason and nature prescribe, with the instruction of revealed religion. It was one of the first books published after the invention of printing, being edited at Mentz by Fust and Peter Schœffer†. It was soon commented on by Erasmus, Melancthon, and other reformers.

It will not be expected that much can be drawn from the writings of Cicero, in confirmation of the evidence of revealed religion: there are some circumstances, however, which deserve consideration, and some

* De Seuectute, 21. De legibus, 1—9. et passim.

† Mattaire annal. typograph. p. 60.

particulars which tend to throw light on parts of Scripture.

A passage has been already cited, in which this great writer celebrates the moderation and forbearance manifested by Pompey towards the temple of Jerusalem, and expresses himself with some ambiguity with regard to the impressions of that General concerning the religion of the Jews *.

Cicero himself denied the existence of inspiration, and speaks of the Jewish religion with the pride of an heathen philosopher, describing it as abhorrent from the splendour of the Roman empire, the greatness of its name, and the institutions of its ancestors. He appears even to have descended to a degrading species of wit, in order to indulge his unphilosophical prejudices, since he asks with respect to Cæcilius, who would have prosecuted Verres, and who was suspected of being a Jew, what has a Jew to do with swine's flesh? alluding to the word "Verres," which means a boar pig.

The mind of Cicero had not been directed to testimonies by which it must have been

* Pro Flacco, p. 112 (vol. i.) of this work.

impressed. He had heard of prophecies with respect to the great Sovereign, who was to establish dominion in the world, but derided them as enthusiastic, and reprobated their application to Lentulus * and Cæsar, but he had no notion that a revelation had been imparted to Judea, and that a Redeemer should arise from a city which had been subjected to the Romans.

Cicero speaks of gold being sent every year out of Italy, and all the provinces, to Jerusalem, and commends Flaccus for having opposed the custom †. The orator alludes probably to the two drachmas which were paid by each individual for the support of the temple at Jerusalem, and which Vespasian commanded to be paid into the Capitol ‡. Our Saviour seems to allude to the application of the money as appropriated to the temple in his time, when he proposed his question to St. Peter §, intimating that as he was the Son of God, to whom the temple

* In Catalin. Orat. iii. § 1. and Orat. iv. § 6. See also de Divin. lib. i. § 2.

† Pro Flacco, c. 28.

‡ Josephus Antiq. and de Bell. Jud. lib. vii. c. 6. See also Dion Cassius, lib. lxxvi. c. 7. p. 1082. Edit Reimar. Grotius and Hammond.

§ Matt. xvii. 24—26.

was dedicated, he might be deemed exempt from the operation of the claim.

It appears from the Acts of the Apostles, that Lysias commanded that St. Paul should be examined by scourging *; and there are accounts in heathen writings which prove that torture was customary among the Romans, and that scourging was part of it †.

St. Paul is also represented as asking, is it lawful to scourge a person uncondemned? Cicero says it was a crime to bind or whip a Roman citizen ‡; and it was a law of the twelve tables §, that no man should be put to death before trial ||.

* Acts xxii. 23, 24.

† Sueton. August. 19. 27. Tacit. Annal. 15. 57. Seneca De Ira, lib. iii. c. 18, 19. et Lardner, Credibil. b. i. c. 1.

‡ In Verrem, l. v. et Orat. pro Rabirio.

§ Fragment 12. tab. tit. 2. § 1. 1.

|| Antiq. Rom. lib. iii. c. 22.

CHAP. XLIV.

Marcus Terentius Varro.

VARRO, who was born about 116 years before Christ, was the intimate friend of Cicero. He was a Senator and a Tribune, attached to the party of Pompey, but afterwards reconciled to Cæsar, notwithstanding which, he was proscribed by Antony.

Varro was eminently distinguished for his multifarious learning and attainments, and was particularly conversant with the religious and civil antiquities of his country, concerning which he wrote forty-one books*. He presided over the Greek and Latin libraries at Rome. Most of the productions of this learned man have perished; they are said to have been rather useful than eloquent. Three books *De re Rustica*, however, written when he had attained his 80th year, still

* August. de Civit. Dei. l. vi. c. 3.

remain; and together with his work *De Lingua Latina*, of which the three first books are lost, were published with the notes of Scaliger and others at Paris, by Henry Stephens, in 1569, and in subsequent editions. A few other fragments of his writings are extant; little, however, is to be collected from them, which bears upon the objects of this work. From what St. Augustin has stated, it appears that they must have afforded considerable information concerning the origin of the religious institutions of his country, and of the sentiments which prevailed in his time. He appears to have exposed the ignorance of the priesthood, and the errors of the popular superstition, though he thought that there were some things false, with respect to which the people ought not to be undeceived. The variety of opinions which existed concerning subjects of religious interest was so great, that according to his statement, there were two hundred and eighty-eight different theories or opinions at least concerning the *Summum-bonum* *. He speaks of three kinds of theology, the

* August. de Civit. Dei. l. 19. c. 1. and Baker on Learning, page 70.

fabulous, the physical, and the civil; the second of which alone gave any just and philosophical description of the Divine nature; the dramatic and political being accommodated to vulgar apprehensions.

Varro himself subscribed to the doctrine of Pythagoras, and believed in the existence of one supreme and universal Deity, which he regarded as the soul of the universe, or the Deity pervading every part. He admitted, however, partial and dependent gods animated with intelligence superior to men, and existing in the celestial bodies; and invisible beings inhabiting the middle region of the air, called Heroes, Lares, and Genii. But he confesses that the gods might be worshipped with the greatest purity without images*, as they were by the ancient Romans for 170 years; and by the Jews.

Fabricius speaks of a sentiment ascribed to Varro, which bears some resemblance to the instruction afterwards given by our Saviour.

“ Si vis ad summum progredi, ab infimo ordine.”

“ Whosoever would be greatest among you, let him be least.”

* August. de Civit. Dei. lib. iv. cap. 31. Cudworth, b. 1. c. 4.

CHAP. XLV.

Caius Sallustius Crispus.

SALLUST, however distinguished as an historian, requires only ■ cursory notice, since he affords but little to illustrate the objects in contemplation in the present publication. His character, as reported to us, by no means accords with the principles of rectitude and virtue recommended in his writings. He was of an illustrious family, and born at Amiternum, a town of the Sabines, A. U. C. 668. He was employed in offices of authority and trust, and associated with men of eminence and dignity, but so degraded himself by his vices, that he was expelled the Senate. Being restored by Cæsar to his rank, and appointed to the government of Numidia, he returned from Africa with great riches, and his palace and gardens on the

Quirinal Hill, at Rome, were long celebrated for their extent and beauty.

Sallust, having injured society by his example, made some atonement to the world by his two histories, in which, in the most animated style, and by the most impressive representations he demonstrated the public and private effects of ambition and profligacy. The picture of the corruption of Rome, of which he gives a strong outline, exhibits the influence of the libertine principles which had sapped the Roman virtue; and the pages of his history prepare us for the loss of the liberties which the people soon experienced; since Sallust represents even Jugurtha to have complained of the venality of Rome, and to have left the city with a declaration which was too soon verified, that if the city could find a purchaser it would be sold.

After the circumstances of the Jugurthine war, which was carried on A. U. C. 644, we are not surprised to read of the conspiracy of Cataline, which took place 48 years after, though the history of it was written, before that of the Jugurthine war.

The historian who lived in habits of intimacy with Cicero, and who married his divorced wife Terentia, had sufficient oppor-

tunities of contemplating his public and private virtues, but he seems to withhold much of that praise to which the Consul was justly entitled for his vigorous and judicious exertions upon this occasion. The detail, however, which Sallust gives of the characters of those who associated against their country, and who engaged even noble and accomplished females in their cause; and the delusion which occasioned Lentulus to be considered as the object of prophecy, destined by the gods for empire; afford sufficient eulogium on the vigilance and judgment by which the views of the conspirators were frustrated. The Romans in general, indeed, in the depraved and capricious spirit of the time, soon manifested a want of gratitude for the services of their protector; and banished Cicero to gratify the corrupt views of Clodius.

The description of the private life, and of the period of Sallust, is heightened by the contrast which it exhibits to the impressive reflections interspersed in the work, with respect to the superior glory of intellectual pursuits over the short-lived and ignoble pleasures of the body*; the nature of the

* Bell. Cat. sect. 1.

gods who favour active virtue* ; and the perfections and immortality of the soul. On the latter subject, we meet with the following striking passage in the account of the Jugurthine war :—" Corporis, et fortunæ, bonorum, uti initium, sic finis est ; omniaque orta occidunt, et aucta senescunt : Animus incorruptus, æternus, rector humani generis, agit, atque habet cuncta, neque ipse habetur †."

Queen Elizabeth, as Cambden and Montague ‡ inform us, translated Sallust.

* Bell. Cat. sect. 52. See also sect. 2.

† Sect. 2.

‡ Preface to Works of King James. London. 1616.

CHAP. XLVI.

Caius Julius Cæsar.

THIS eminent man, who carried the Roman arms into Britain, and changed the republican government into a perpetual dictatorship, was more distinguished for the vigour of his character, than for his virtues.

Formed to execute great actions, and endowed with talents to describe them, he performed things worthy to be written, and wrote things worthy to be read. More anxious, however, for fame and power, than solicitous about the means by which they were to be obtained, he accomplished his object only to illustrate the vanity of ambition, and the instability of dominion, when not founded on justice and constitutional claims. Stigmatized as he deserves to be, for having subverted the liberties of his country, it still must be allowed that the violence and ar-

bitrary assumption of power which before his time prevailed at Rome, the flagrant excesses of popular sedition, and the outrages of factious men, which seemed to bid defiance to all controul of authority and law, plead some excuse for his usurpation; and we must admit, that after the proscriptions and cruelties which had been witnessed, he was entitled to some praise for the moderation which he displayed in the exercise of sovereign power. His assassination, which took place about forty-four years before Christ, placed his country in a state of insecurity and dissension, which left no hope for the restoration of tranquillity but in the establishment of a monarchical power. The spirit of patriotism and freedom was lost, and men were sunk into an apathy, from which the eloquence of Cicero in vain attempted to rouse them.

The seven books of the Commentaries, which Cæsar wrote, include the events of seven years; the eighth book was composed by A. Hirtius, who is said also to have added a part of a ninth book, which is lost, and which is supposed to have related to an expedition of Cæsar to Ireland, called also

Britannia *. We find but little in what remains of these commentaries applicable to the design of this work: they lead us, however to remark, that the picture which the author gives of the manners of the original inhabitants of Britain and of Gaul, afford striking illustrations of the mischievous influence of the superstition under which they lived, though some slight traces may be discerned in them of their acquaintance with Hebrew customs, and the precepts of the Mosaic law †.

Cæsar represents the Britons to have allowed, in societies of ten or twelve persons, a community of wives, even to incestuous intercourse ‡. He states that the Gauls of-

* Sueton. in Jul. c. 56. Fabric. et Selden, *Mare clausum*, l. ii. c. 1.

† They reckoned time by nights, and in the observance of birth-days, of the beginning of months and of years, the day followed the night. Hence the origin of the words *s'ennight* (seven-night) and *fortnight* (fourteen-night.) See l. vi. c. 18. p. 236. Edit. Amstel. Elz. 1670. Husbands gave portions equivalent to what they received with their wives, and had the power of life and death over their children. Vide l. vi. c. 19. p. 236, 237. Gen. xxxiv. 12. I Sam. xviii. 25. Deut. xxi. 18. They abstained from eating the hare. De Bell. Gall. l. v. c. 12. Edit. Davisii. p. 150. Compare with Levit. xi. 6.

‡ De Bell. Gall. l. v. p. 153.

ferred up human sacrifices, and made vows when exposed to danger, that they would perform such sanguinary immolations; that they used the ministry of the Druids upon such occasions, conceiving that unless the life of man was rendered for the life of man, the Deity of the immortal gods could not be appeased; and that they had sacrifices of the same kind publicly instituted*: he adds, that some prepared images of prodigious magnitude, the limbs of which they filled with living men, and covered with twigs, which being set on fire, destroyed the men, who were enclosed and circumvented by the flames; that they supposed those persons who were taken in theft or robbery, or any crime, to be the most acceptable victims to the immortal gods; but that when a sufficiency of this kind was wanting, they had recourse to the innocent for the purposes of sacrifice.

Cæsar likewise relates, that the Druids taught that souls did not perish, but passed after death from one body to another; and that they were of opinion, that by this doc-

* De Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 16. p. 199.

trine, men were excited to virtue, and to a disregard of death *.

From the circumstances mentioned, arguing an acquaintance with the corrupt notions which perverted the principles of the Patriarchal faith, by introducing horrible rites of propitiation, and the immolation of human victims in groves and forests; and from the knowledge of astronomy and magical arts which the Druids appear to have possessed, there is reason to believe, that the superstition which Cæsar describes was derived from the East; and was introduced into Britain either by some of the Celtic descendants of Japhet, by whom the isles were peopled, or possibly by some Phœnicians, who had commercial intercourse with Britain †.

The Pythagorean notions which prevailed might have been obtained at Marseilles, where the principal Gauls received their education ‡. Cæsar informs us that the Druids were acquainted with the Greek language, which they probably acquired, to-

* De Bell. Gall. l. vi. c. 14. p. 198.

† See Maurice's Indian Antiquities, vol. vi. p. 60.

‡ Strabo, lib. iv. p. 248. Edit. Oxon. Lipsius Physiol. Strictures, lib. iii. Dissert. 12. Not. in Cæsarem. Edit. Davisii. Valer. Max. l. 2. c. 6.

gether with traditions of Oriental knowledge in that city, which was peopled by a Grecian colony *. Cæsar, seems to have been of opinion, that the discipline of the Druids was originally introduced from Britain into Gaul.

If we consider the abominations that overspread these countries, we must admire the providence of God which effected their subjection to the Roman power at the period of the birth of Christ; and thereby facilitated the introduction of Christianity soon after its promulgation. The dissensions and factions † which prevailed in every part and almost in every house of Gaul, rendered it an easier conquest.

Suetonius ascribes the three books *De Bello Civili* to Cæsar, and states that some attributed the *Commentaries* on the Alexandrian, African, and Spanish wars, to Hirtius or Oppius ‡.

The plain and simple style, in which the distinguished actions of Cæsar are recorded, is well suited to the dignified character of their author. Henry the IVth of France,

* Justin. l. xxxvii. c. 1.

† Cæsar, l. vi. c. 13. p. 196.

‡ In Jul. c. 56.

and Louis the XIVth, translated his Commentaries, the version of the latter was published at Paris in 1661.

Cæsar left also two books on Analogy, and two against Cato, and likewise a poem entitled *Iter*, together with letters to the senate, to Cicero, and to persons of his own household, with a tragedy, and some other slight productions. Augustus forbid that any of these should be published.

CHAP. XLVII.

Publius Virgilius Maro.

VIRGIL, who stands pre-eminent, and second only to Homer among the Heathen poets, was born at Andes, about three miles from Mantua, A. U. C. 684, and seventy years before Christ, on the very day, as some report, on which Lucretius died. Though appearing in a low station of life, he had the means of prosecuting his studies at Mantua, Cremona, and Naples, and was educated in the Epicurean principles, but adopted, in his improved judgment, the system of Plato.

It is interesting to mark the influence of events on the human character, and to observe what beneficial effects sometimes result from circumstances of distress. The difficulties and harsh treatment which Virgil experienced when compelled to leave his paternal property, upon the country being

divided by Augustus among his soldiers, procured for him the patronage of the Emperor, which was afterwards by his interest extended to Horace; they led also to the production of the *Georgics*, a poem which gradually excited a spirit that repaired the injuries sustained by the country, during the civil war, in consequence of the allotment of land to the soldiers; and which has generated indeed an admiration of the works of nature, and a love of agriculture in every age.

Hence also resulted the opportunities which enabled Virgil to obtain that information upon subjects of sacred interest, which appears particularly in the fourth *Eclogue*. From the earliest ages, the connection which exists between the representations in this poem, and those of the inspired writings, excited attention. Constantine argued the truth of the Christian religion, and the inspiration of the Erythræan, (whom some suppose to have been the same with the Cummæan) Sibyl, from the correspondence which this *Eclogue* and the Sibylline verses exhibited with the descriptions of Revelation*.

* Constant. Orat. ap. Euseb. c. 18 and 19. p. 691. Ed. Cantab. 1720.

That Virgil derived his subject and imagery from sources of inspiration, through whatever channel conveyed, has been often maintained; and that he continued to meditate upon these elevated themes, when he composed the *Georgics*, has been argued from a passage in the third book, in which he expressly declares, in the resolution of a triumphant exertion of his talents, that he would be the first, if life should be continued to him, to bring to his country the Idumæan palms*, that is, not merely allegorical honours for an epic work, but Hebrew subjects written on the leaves of the palm, Idumæa being employed by the Romans as the appellative name of Judæa, and the palm leaves being used as materials whereon to write by the Eastern nations†. The Sibyl of Virgil, who for her acquaintance with Jewish prophecies is sometimes stated to have been of Jewish origin‡, is represented by Varro to have committed her predictions to the leaves of the palm.

* *Primus Idumæas referam. Georgic. lib. iii. l. 12. et Lucan, lib. iii. l. 216.*

† *Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xiii. c. 11. and Henley on the Allegory in the third Georgic.*

‡ *Pausan. lib. x. c. 12. et Salmas, ad Solin. c. 47.*

The sense, the images, and the diction of this poem, conspire so remarkably with those of the prophets, and particularly with passages in Isaiah, that they clearly indicate some affinity. Bishop Lowth, who professes himself utterly unable to discover the design of the poet, intimates a persuasion that some mysterious elevation had been produced on the mind of Virgil by a Divine influence. He observes, that there is an unusual swell of images from a pen generally restrained and correct, and which seems to have diffused a foreign colouring on the work, which every where betrays an acquaintance with the prophetic descriptions revealed with respect to the Messiah and his kingdom *.

The Eclogue opens with an invocation to the Sicilian Muses to assume a loftier strain, declaring that the last age predicted by the Cumæan Sibyl was at length arrived, and a new order of generations about to arise †, in the approaching return of the Virgin, and of a golden age. . Virgil proclaims the advent of a “ new progeny from heaven,” the “ removal of the vestiges of ancient guilt,”

* Prælectio. 21. See Acta Sanctorum Junii, Tom. i. p. 37.

† Comp. l. 5. and Isaiah ix. 6, 7. vii. 14.

and the “release of the world from its perpetual fears.” He describes the life which the person whom he hails, should lead, governing the world with his Father’s virtues, and under whose propitious reign, spontaneous productions, abundance, peace, and universal harmony, should prevail; “the lion lying down with the herd, the serpent being destroyed.” He represents a golden period, to be disturbed only by some remains of ancient guilt, and proclaims the exultation of the world under the pacific dominion of him who is styled “an offspring dear to the gods,” and whose empire was to be extended with universal happiness through every age*. Virgil takes up the general expectation of some great deliverer, then universally entertained. He avails himself of the poetical imagery with respect to the golden age, which was circulated from the time of Hesiod; but beyond this, he must be supposed to have drawn information either from the Sibylline verses, or from some knowledge of the promises of Scripture, ob-

* See Isaiah ii. xi. and lvi. and compare particularly line 13, 14. 17. 24. 29, 30. with Isaiah ii. 4. ix. 6, 7. xi. 6. 8. lv. 13. lx. 18. lxxv. 26. and Eclogue, line 51, 52. with Psalms ii. xi. xcvi. xcvi.

tained from the Septuagint, or by colloquial intercourse with the Jews*.

Traditional prophecies, there can be no doubt, were preserved even in the darkest periods, and were probably committed to writing in very early times. It has been shewn also, that frequent communications took place between the Jews and the Romans†. The Sibylline prophecy purporting that nature was about to bring forth a king, appeared in the year in which Pompey took

* There is some resemblance between a passage in the 5th Eclogue, line 62, and of Isaiah xlv. 23. "*Ipsi lætitiæ voces,*" &c. and "Break forth into singing ye mountains," &c. Compare also Isaiah ix. 7. with 4th Eclogue, line 17.

† 1 Maccabees viii. Joseph de Bel. Jud. l. i. c. 23. Philo Legat. ad Caium.

Bishop Horsley, who by his great powers of mind, regulated by a sound judgment, was peculiarly qualified to illustrate subjects of remote and difficult enquiry, was of opinion that the Cumæan Sibyl, from whom Virgil professes to derive his oracular strains, was in possession of some adulterated fragments of inspired prophecies, which had been committed to writing in very early times, and which had been transmitted from age to age by persons, who continued to preserve the worship of God, often blended with idolatrous service, though they were not in the direct line of those descendants of Abraham, who inherited the promises. See Dissert. on the Prophecies of the Messiah, dispersed among the Heathens, prefixed to nine Sermons on the Resurrection of our Lord.

Jerusalem*; other predictions to the same effect had previously transpired. Many of the Jews constantly resided at Rome; and it may be particularly observed, that when a reconciliation took place between Antony and Octavius, and Pollio had been appointed to the Consulship, the sons of Herod, Alexander and Aristobulus, were sent to Rome, and received into the house of Pollio, with permission to be lodged in the palace of Augustus, and experienced great kindness from the Emperor†.

Some have imagined, that they discover in the *Æneid* an acquaintance with a custom which prevailed among the Jews, Latinus being represented as appearing with his vestment torn in his affliction‡. This expression of grief, however, was probably not peculiar to the Jews.

Different opinions have been entertained as to the person to whom the poet directed the application of his flattery in the 4th *Eclogue* §. Drusus, the supposed son of Augustus by Livia, and Asinius Gallus, the son

* Vossius de Sibyllin. Oracul. c. 4.

† Antiq. l. xv. c. 10. p. 696. Edit. Hudson.

‡ Compare *Æneid*, lib. xii. l. 609. with 2 Sam. xv. 32.

§ See Heynii Argum. ad *Eclog.* 4.

of Pollio, but not born during his consulship*, have been mentioned. Servius erroneously supposes that it was Saloninus, whom he describes as the son, but who, in fact, was the grandson of Pollio, and born after his consulship. Catrou conceives him to have been a son of Marcellus by Octavia, bearing the name of his father, but not born till after the marriage of Octavia with Antony. The best supported opinion seems to be, that the object in contemplation of Virgil was the offspring expected from the marriage of Octavius and Scribonia, which took place towards the beginning of the year of the city 714, forty years before Christ. The misapplication of the poet was sufficiently proved by the immediate event, since not a son, the harbinger of peace, and the restorer of virtue, but a female, the infamous Julia, was born in the succeeding year.

Mr. Henley imagines the *Æneid* also to have a prophetic character, and to have been designed to reconcile the Romans to the loss of their freedom, and to the government of Augustus, by representing him, who had established an usurpation erected on the

* Bp. Horsley, p. 18.

ruins of their ancient liberty, as the progeny whom the prophecies had foretold was to descend from heaven to restore the golden age, and to extend his peaceful dominion to the remotest parts*.

His opinion is confirmed in some degree by a passage in an epistle from Virgil to Augustus, which we still possess, in which the poet, in speaking of the *Æneid*, intimates the hope of being able to impart to it the improvement to be derived from higher and better studies. Be this as it may, the *Æneid* exhibits some of the leading principles of truth originally revealed from heaven, as those of the unity, the omnipotence, and the omnipresence of the divinity; who continues to nourish and give motion to all things; from whom the race of men, of cattle, of birds, and of fish, derive their being; and who is the mind to the vast

* *Æneid*. vi. l. 790—796. Vid. Horat. *Curm.* lib. i. ode 2. l. 41—49. Virgil appears also to speak remarkably of Augustus in the following line :

“ Hujus in adventu jam nunc et Caspia regna

“ Responsis horrent Divum.”

In these he is thought to allude to the Assyrian, Jewish, and other prophecies. See Warton and Heyne on lib. vi. v. 798, 799. et Sueton. August. c. 94.

body of the universe*. Virgil, as Minutius Felix has observed, speaks upon this occasion, a language which was general among the poets, and which was derived probably from Scripture through the writings of Plato.

He inculcated also, under popular and poetic representations, a belief in a state of future rewards and punishments; and it is observable, that he describes with pathetic effect, those who terminated their own existence, as exposed to endless remorse and suffering†. Warburton supposes the 6th book to exhibit a detail of the initiation to the Eleusinian mysteries; and other writers discover in Virgil's descriptions many circumstances very similar to those, which are supposed by the advocates of purgatory to operate to the correction of the wicked in a future state‡.

The jesuit Harduin, in his wild attempt

* *Æneid*, lib. vi. l. 724—9. In the 4th *Georgic*, the same passage recurs with this additional opinion, that as all things derive their being from God, so, after death, they will not be annihilated, but will return into his essence. *Georgic*. lib. iv. l. 221—5.

† Lib. vi. l. 432—9.

‡ See lib. vi. l. 735—44. et Augustin. de civitat. Dei, lib. xxi. c. 13.

to destroy the authority of human learning, and to render every thing of uncertain pretension except the infallible claims of the holy See, endeavours to prove, from internal evidence, that the *Æneid* was the work of a Christian writer, who fabricated a romantic poem, for the purpose of giving a correct representation of the triumph of Christianity in its establishment upon the ruins of the Jewish religion*. He pretends that the demolition of Troy figured out the destruction of Jerusalem; that the removal of the Pagan deities to Italy under the care of *Æneas* represented the introduction of the Gospel to Rome; and the death of *Turnus* the extinction of Judaism. He farther conceives, that the Phrygian household gods, who appeared in a dream to *Æneas*, and who predicted the elevation of his descendants, and their power in the future city, were to shadow out in prophetic description, the Christian pontiffs, who should be suc-

* Observat. in *Æneid*, § 2. l. 148—62. Oper. Amstel. 1733. Harduin might have pushed his theory farther by referring to the lines in the book, which seem to contain representations similar to those of the Romish church with respect to the doctrine of purgatory. See also *l'Inferno* de Dante, Canto 54. Concil Florent. Sess. 25.

cessively established in the visible church at Rome*.

Quintilian † recommends that the poems of Virgil, as well as those of Homer, should be read by children, though a mature judgment is necessary for a full apprehension of their value. This eminent critic was of opinion, that the mind rose with the sublimity of heroic verse, and derived a spirit from the magnitude of the events which formed its subject. Without adverting to the respective merits of the two poets, we may observe, that every tribute of applause is due to Virgil, who, after having done homage to the majesty of nature, in his *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, rose to a higher theme, and appears to have adopted many of the figures employed by the sacred writers.

The admiration of Virgil, which prevailed during his life, was pushed so far that he was represented to have performed miracles by magic; and a superstitious reverence for his works, retained its effect in later times, so

* *Observat. in Æneid*, l. iii. p. 295, and *Virgil*, lib. iii. l. 148—60. See also lib. vi. l. 781.

† *De Institut. Orator.* lib. i. c. 8. § 51. p. 64. lib. x. c. 1. l. xii. c. 1. Edit. Gibson.

that they were consulted as oracular in concerns of importance *, and his verses were sometimes reported to have had an influence on beings who are beyond the reach of human power. Ignatius Loyola availed himself of this credulity, pretending to expel a dæmon from a man, by repeating some lines from the fourth *Æneid*. Dante, in his poetical devices, delivered Virgil from hell.

It is well known that Charles the First experienced, when at Oxford, a remarkable result from an experiment of this nature. Lord Falkland, willing to divert the king's mind, proposed to him to try the *Sortes Virgilianæ*, in a splendid edition shewn to his Majesty in the Bodleian. The king opened the book at Dido's imprecation, and was affected at reading the following lines, which bore a striking resemblance to the circumstances of his impending fate.

At bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
 Finibus extorris, complexu avolsus Juli,
 Auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum
 Funera, nec, quum se sub leges pacis iniquiæ
 Tradiderit, regno, aut optata luce fruatur;
 Sed cadat ante diem, mediaque inhumatus arenâ †.

* Antonius Van Dale de Oraculis, p. 301.

† Lib. iv. l. 615—20. See Welwood's Memoirs, p. 90.

Lord Falkland, in order to do away the impression on the king's mind, opened the book to try his fortune, and struck upon a passage still more expressive of his own fate.

Non hæc, O Palla, dederas promissa parenti,
Cautius ut sævo velles te credere marti,
Haud ignarus eram, quantum nova gloria in armis,
Et prædulce decus primo certamine posset,
Primitiæ juvenis miseræ, bellicque propinqui
Dura rudimenta *!

It has been among the idle amusements of scholars, who have maintained a mingled respect for sacred and prophane literature, to accommodate the language of heathen writers to the accounts of Scripture. A writer of the fourth century, composed a work on the Creation, from the lines of Virgil, while others applied his verses to the history of Christ; among these productions may be mentioned that of Alexander Ross, of Aberdeen, who published a whole history of our Saviour in thirteen books, framed from the verses of the poet†.

* *Æneid*, lib. xi. l. 152—56.

† *Virgilius Evangelizans, sive historia Domini nostri Virgilianis versibus descripta Operâ Alexandri Rossæi, Aberdeniensis*. London. Jacob Buckland, in Paternoster-row, 1769. See also *Fabricius Centones Virgilian. Isidore Orig. lib. i.*

CHAP. XLVIII.

Horace.

HORACE was born at Venusium in Apulia, A. U. C. 689, sixty-four years before the Christian æra. We collect from his own ingenuous confessions, that he incurred disgrace in military service; but his eminent talents, and his success in literature, obtained for him the notice and patronage of Mæcenas and Augustus. It is said, that he was introduced by Virgil to Mæcenas, and that he was offered a situation of trust by the Emperor, but with that spirit of independence which appears in his writings, he declined it.

Quintilian describes Horace as the only Lyric poet among the ancient Romans who deserves to be read. He is entitled, however, to be regarded in the higher character of a moral writer, who satirizes vice with liberal censure, and playful urbanity of manners. The exquisite beauty of his odes illustrates the

effect of style, in giving weight and ornament to sentiments which have often but little intrinsic importance, and in conferring grace on the merest trifles. His ethical writings, though degraded by some indelicacies, which Quintilian was unwilling to interpret *, and inferior in strength to those of Juvenal, are not so often reprehensible for those coarse and offensive representations, which frequently shock the reader in other classical works ; while his critical productions inculcate rules which have directed the taste and judgment of all succeeding times. As a philosopher, Horace disclaims devotion to any master ; he sometimes, indeed, seems to join with the herd of the followers of Epicurus, and in some of his odes, he exhorts so warmly to the enjoyment of the present time, and to ■ dismissal of all solicitude † for the morrow, that his writings may serve as a comment upon the allusion of the Apostle, when he adverts with censure to the Epicurean sentiment ; “ Let us eat and “ drink, for to-morrow we die.”

At other times Horace, in a nobler spirit, appears to renounce these sensual maxims,

* De Institut. Orat. lib. i.

† See lib. i. ode 9. line 13. lib. i. ode 37. ode 11. line 1—8. compare with 1 Cor. xv. 32. See also Isa. xxii. 13.

and to become a disciple of severer philosophers. He points out in a moral strain, and with striking effect, the vicissitudes of fortune, the danger of elevation, the rise of men from the lowest state, and the sudden calamities which intermingle with human triumphs*. He seems to have borrowed from Plato the remarks which he so happily illustrates with respect to the discontent of men ever dissatisfied with their lot in life†. He illustrates also one of the most useful precepts of human reason, that in which Pythagoras recommends to his followers every night to take a review of the thoughts and actions of the preceding day. Bentley, who seems unwilling to believe that Horace could admire the suicide of Cato, proposes to substitute Curti for Catonis, in the twelfth ode of the first book, but without authority to support the alteration.

There are many passages in Horace, which indicate an acquaintance with traditions founded on truth. He alludes to the formation of man from the earth‡, to corrupted

* Lib. i. ode 35. line 1. l. 2. ode 10.

† Sat. i. v. 1—12. Comp. Plato Dialogue Axioch. p. 368. Edit. Steph.

‡ Lib. i. ode 16. l. 13.

accounts of the deluge *, and of the building of Babel †, to the shortening of human life ‡, to the necessity of an expiation §, to the blessing of having neither poverty or riches, and to the reward of pious men in the regions of joy ||. He seems to have considered the entailing of punishment as not inconsistent with divine appointments ¶; he speaks of God as the ruler of the world **, and of Jupiter as the great parent, who directs the affairs of men and gods, the sea, the earth, and the world ††, than whom nothing greater is generated, and to whom nothing similar or second exists, though Pallas hath occupied the honours next to those of Jove. Dr. Stuckley endeavours to persuade us, that the 19th ode of the 2d book has a prophetic reference to the Messiah, who was expected under some descrip-

* Lib. i. ode 2. l. 6.

† Lib. i. ode 3. l. 38, lib. ii. ode 12. l. 7. lib. iii. ode 4. l. 42

‡ Lib. i. ode 3. l. 32, 33.

§ Lib. i. ode 2. l. 29.

|| Lib. i. ode 10, l. 17.

¶ Lib. iii. ode 6. l. 1. compare with Job xxi. 19.

** Lib. i. ode 34. l. 13. lib. iii. ode 4. l. 48. Epodon. ode 5. l. 8.

†† Lib. i. ode 12. l. 13—20. See also line 3. ode 4. line 42—48.

tion misapplied to Bacchus*. The beautiful ode in which the dangers of the republic threatened by the arms of Pompey is illustrated under the image of a ship in distress, and which is supposed to have been borrowed, for Alcæus bears a remarkable and very minute resemblance to some particulars of a figurative representation by Isaiah, in which under the same emblem of a ship is described the peril of a state labouring under difficulties †.

It may be observed, that there is a general correspondence between a remark of the poet, and one made by St. Paul when speaking with reference, we may presume, to the Isthmian games celebrated at Corinth; both writers stating that those who contended in the games observed great temperance and moderation. St. Paul applied the lesson to the necessity of subjecting the body to discipline, with respect to those who contended for an incorruptible crown ‡.

Harduin, in his extravagant theory, maintains that the greater part of the writings of

* Vide Pælaograph. Sacr.

† Lib. i. ode 14. compare with Isai. xxxiii. 21. 24, and Ezek. xxxvii. 21—29.

‡ Compare de Arte poet. l. 412. with 1 Cor. ix. 25.

Horace was fabricated by a Christian author, and that his works abound every where with allusions to doctrines and circumstances connected with religion and its history. The learned, but visionary Jesuit, does not allow any thing of this writer to be genuine but the epistles and satires. In his chimerical illusions he supposes that Mæcenas, in the sixteenth ode of the third book, was stiled the ornament of the Knights, to represent Christ the protector of the Knights of Jerusalem, and of the Knights Templars. In the same spirit, he fancies the twenty-second ode of the first book to relate to Christian piety, in which Fuscus is a representative of Christ, and Lallage a personification of devotion. He considers Codrus also willing to die for his country, as an image of our Saviour* ; and the twentieth ode of the second book to be descriptive of his triumph after his resurrection†, and of his two-fold character in his

* Lib. iii. ode 19. l. 1, 2.

† The absurdity of the theory is sometimes extremely amusing: the Author states it to be indisputable that the lines 14—20 of lib. ii. ode 20, allude to the preachers of the inquisition, who in 1253, were employed to enforce the orthodox faith; and that Britain, Ireland, Germany, and Hungary, Poland, Italy, and Sicily are not mentioned, because they were already Catholic countries. He supposes lines 23, 24 to allude to customs at the Jewish funerals.

divine and human nature, not born of poor parents, or to be holden by the Stygian water. Moreover he discovers in the term Diespiter, in the thirty-fourth Ode of the first book, a title of Hebrew extraction, applicable to our Lord, and expressive of destruction to his enemies*, and in Ode II. lib. iii. line 29, he finds a prophetic allusion to the demolition of Jerusalem by 'Titus.

The most preposterous part of the hypothesis, which is to be raised on the ruins of the heathen mythology, supposes the second Ode of the second book, which intimates wrath to be due to him who should publish the sacred mysteries of Ceres, to allude to transubstantiation, the doctrines of which were not to be communicated to catechumens†; it seems scarcely possible to carry speculation farther.

* Vide note in edit. Zeunii, 1809, p. 64.

† Animadver. in l. 3. Odarum.

CHAP. XLIX.

Publius Ovidius Naso.

OID, whose works are rendered familiar to us by early acquaintance, was born at Sulmo, 43 years before the Christian æra. He was descended from a family of the equestrian order, and enjoyed the favour of Augustus, till for some offence given to the Emperor by his writings and conduct, he was banished by him to Tomi in Scythia, on the borders of the Euxine sea, where he deplored his fate in elegiac verse, and being unable to obtain ■ release, died in exile at the age of sixty.

The genius and style of this writer are certainly more calculated to amuse than to improve the mind; he leads the imagination through all the wilds of fiction, where little solid information is to be collected; his works afford however a pleasing introduction to Pagan mythology, and if the impression

which results from his writings has a tendency to corrupt the taste, it is soon corrected in the ordinary course of classical education by the chastened poetry of Virgil. Memorials of truth however are to be discovered under his fictions, and in looking back with maturer judgment to the works which he raised, and which he delighted to contemplate as indestructible monuments of genius, we often perceive amidst many grotesque and ill conceived designs, the well-wrought materials and mutilated fragments of an original and sacred edifice.

In admitting that some advantage may be derived from the writings of Ovid, the author would be understood to speak only of those works which are usually read in public seminaries of education, since no apology can be offered for the other productions of this poet, which directly administer to the passions, and reduce the arts of licentiousness to a system. The vicious affections of men do not require the excitement of poetry, to stimulate their corrupt propensities; and it is the excess of unpardonable depravity, the effect of which never can be recalled, to employ eminent talents in diffusing and perpetuating the allurements to moral evil.

These productions corrupted the Roman youth, and excited the virtuous indignation of Augustus: they have been generally rejected by the just feelings of the Christian.

Ovid in his *Fasti*, a work supposed to be grounded on the *Carmen Saliare* of Numa, exhibits an account of the festivals of the heathens, and shews that he entertained but little respect for the Pagan deities, whom he uniformly represents as actuated, and impelled to depravity by human passions.

In the *Metamorphoses* which begin with the commencement of the world, and terminate with the death of Cæsar, Ovid appears to have intended to indulge the luxuriancy of a poetic imagination, by a work of fancy peculiar to himself. It is possible that the design was suggested to him by the doctrine of the metempsychosis of Pythagoras, to whose tenets he appears to have been partial, and whose philosophy, he has stated, agreeably to the mode in which it was originally delivered *, in verses which for perspicuity and elegance might almost dispute the palm with Lucretius †.

Remains of a primitive creed in one su-

* Cicero. *Tuscul. Quest. lib. iv.* and Vitruv. *lib. v. procem.*

† *Metamorph. lib. xv.* Vitruv. *de Architect. L. 5. Præf. P. 78.* Edit. Amstel.

preme God, under whatever name known, the Father of gods and men, and entitled to admiration and gratitude, together with vestiges of traditionary knowledge, if not of sacred history, appear in every part of the *Metamorphoses*. In the very commencement of the work we discover amidst many extravagant fancies, almost a transcript of the Mosaic account of the creation, in which the progress and development of the mighty work are detailed in their successive stages, and nearly in the same order in which they are displayed by the inspired writer.

After the description of Chaos, which Ovid represents as without form and dark *, but, in the error of heathen philosophy, as consisting of pre-existing matter, rather than as void, he proceeds to mention the separation of the heavens from the earth, and the division, or gathering together of the waters; the shining forth of the lights in the firmament of heaven; the production of animals; and lastly, the formation of man, created *either*, or, as perhaps it may be understood, *partly* from a Divine Spirit, and partly from earth; and formed in the image

* *Metamorph. i. and Fasti. lib. i. § 4*

of the Gods*. After this he describes the four ages characterized by some figures which should seem to have been originally derived from Daniel †; and in the well known fables, concerning the corruption of mankind, the daring attempts of the giants, the council of God to destroy the world by a flood, the renewal of the human race by Deucalion, the transformation of Lycaon, the destruction of the serpent Python, and the history of Phaeton, Cadmus, Iphigenia, and others, many unobliterated characters of truth may be discovered.

The book *de Vetula*, published at Cologne, in 1470, with a preface by Leo of Byzantium, is no doubt supposititious ‡, and written long after the time of Ovid. The mention of algebra, alchemy, and other words of Arabian derivation, as well as the use of expressions which are evidently ecclesiastical, would sufficiently prove the forgery, even if it were not demonstrated by passages respecting the unity of God; the creation of the world from nothing; the resurrection

* *Finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta Deorum. Lib. i. l. 76. 78. 81.* See also *Metam. lib. i. l. 22.*

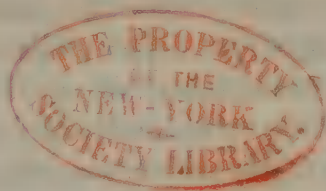
† *Dan. ii. 31. 33.*

‡ *Polycarpus Lyserus, Hist. Poetar. Medii. Ævi. p. 2089.*

of the dead ; the Trinity ; and the Virgin Mary, who is said to have been a Mediatrix, and taken up into Heaven ; circumstances which sufficiently illustrate in what quarter the fabrication originated *. Roger Bacon, from his regard to astrology, alleges the testimony of this work †.

* Fabric. Bib. Lat. Supplement. Ovid. p. 383.

† Johan. Picus. lib. i. in Astrologos, p. 284. Opp. et Rob. Holkot, lect. 21. in lib. Sapient.



CHAP. L.

Titus Livius.

THIS eminent historian was born at Padua, or in its immediate vicinity *, A. U. C. 695, and died in the fourth year of Tiberius. He is represented to have been employed on his history about the 730th year of Rome, and must have been engaged in the work a considerable length of time. He professes to have undertaken it with a view to divert his mind from a contemplation of existing evils, alluding to the vices and distractions of his time, and to the subversion of the freedom of his country. Livy is celebrated by Tacitus for his distinguished eloquence and fidelity ; and by Seneca as a most candid estimator of all good men. The frankness with which he

* Sigonius contends that he was born at Apona, now called Abano, see Martial, lib. i. Epig. lxii. ; his remains are said to have been found in the fifteenth century. See Vossius. De Hist. Lat. lib. 1.

treats of Brutus and Cassius, and the boldness with which he does justice to the character of Pompey, reflect credit upon Augustus as well as upon himself, since, though on account of his tribute to Pompey, he was styled Pompeianus by the Emperor, he does not appear to have suffered any diminution in his esteem*; but was appointed by him tutor to his grandson Claudius. The free spirit in which he wrote, gave offence, however, to Caligula and Domitian, by the former of whom, the statues erected to the honour of the historian were removed.

The work of Livy was originally composed in a hundred and forty-two books, containing a history of the Roman empire, from its commencement to the year of the city 744. Only thirty-five books of it are now extant. They are written with great clearness and beauty, and with an exuberant flow of eloquence †.

* Tacit. Annal. l. iv. § 34.

† Quintil. Institut. l. x. § 502. l. 10. 513. Gravina has observed, that even the epitome of Livy should be read as a compendium by those who are first introduced to Roman history, as being more simple and perspicuous than the works of Florus and Paterculus, and as recording events in proper and suitable words without parade or subtlety, from which those authors are not always free. The original work of

The author complains that it was difficult in his time to collect any thing certain of the ancient history of Rome. Many circumstances which he introduces are probably fictitious or borrowed, as particularly what relates to the rape of the Sabines*, and which possibly was founded on some accounts of the violent procedure of the Benjamites towards the daughters of Shiloh. Fabius Pictor, who wrote an account of the Carthaginian war, Polybius, and a few other writers, preceded him; in whose works probably there was but little correctness of detail, excepting in the history of Polybius, from whom Livy copied much†.

Livy is said to have been less accurate in his statements with respect to military, than with regard to civil affairs. His work, like that of heathen historians in general, is indebted to modern chronologists, for the specification of its periods and dates. It ex-

Livy has been regarded as a model, and has been imitated by Buchanan, Frienshemius, Mariana, and others. See Gravina de Instaurat. Studior. Orat. 1. p. 94. Edit. viri, omni honore ac studio prosequendi, Tho. Burgess, Episcopi Menevensis.

* Comp. 1. i. § 9. p. 25. with Judges i. 21. and Iliad, lib. xvi. v. 180. et seq.

† L. xxxiv. § 50. l. xxxvi. § 19. 1 Liv. l. i. Voss. c. 3, 4.

hibits a continued succession of events, with which but few reflections are intermixed. It is a work, however, extremely favourable to moral impressions; and abounds with memorials of piety displayed in the early times of the Republic, and with striking examples of virtue *. It illustrates the effects of concord and patriotism, in conducting a nation to eminence, and the distinction which is conferred by moderation, forbearance, and devotion to the public good. The generous and disinterested spirit which prevailed in the earlier periods of the republic, restrained the dissensions of party in subserviency to the common safety. In proportion as this spirit declined, turbulence and sedition increased, and the ambitious factions which came in with prosperity, led the way to destruction of liberty; while the luxury and vicious principles introduced by a series of victories, and by intercourse with foreign countries, rendered those who were masters of the world, the willing slaves to individual tyrants at home.

* L. xxiii. § 8, 9. and Rollin Belles Lettres, vol. ii. p. 153, et Livy passim.

The history of Livy records many particulars with respect to the ancient opinions and customs of the Romans, on subjects of religious interest, which not only tend to prove the preservation of some of the main principles of natural Religion, amidst the delusions which overshadowed the Pagan world ; but which also exhibit the observance of rites and ceremonies that were originally of Divine institution. The detail which Livy supplies upon these subjects, is so full and minute, that he has been styled the ecclesiastical historian, with regard to Roman antiquities *.

Livy represents the early Romans as eminently religious ; commencing every great undertaking by honours paid to the gods, and making the sacrifices which preceded a triumph, to form no inconsiderable part of it.

* The work of Dionysius Halicarnassus is also replete with information upon subjects of religious and antiquarian research ; but as it has rather a general, than a particular bearing, upon the design of this publication, and as what most concerns it in this view may be collected from Livy, a Roman historian ; no separate chapter has been allotted to the antiquities, composed by the former author ; though some occasional extracts are made from it in this work.

He commends them as observant of oaths*, not interpreting sacred obligations and the laws, in accommodation to their own convenience, but squaring their conduct by them†. He describes this people as entertaining a reverence for every thing consecrated to the gods‡, and as averse to receive foreign rites§.

“ Judicabant enim prudentissimi viri omnis divini
 “ humanique juris, nihil æquè dissolvendæ religionis
 “ esse, quàm ubi non patrio, sed externo ritu sacrificar-
 “ retur.”

When the Romans had arrived at the highest point of eminence, with regard to their civil and military virtues, Livy represents the Consul Quintus Marcius Philippus to have encouraged his army which he was leading against Perseus, who was obnoxious for his crimes, by declaring that the Roman people had arrived to the height of power through piety and good faith, which were always favoured by the gods||. Indeed the gratitude of the Romans to the gods¶, for the series

* L. iii. § 20.

† L. ii. § 5.

|| L. xlv. § 1.

‡ L. i. § 20.

§ L. xxxix. § 16. and l. 4. § 30.

¶ L. xl. § 35. et passim.

of victories with which they were favoured, forms a prominent feature in the work of the Latin historian.

Livy produces, however, abundant proofs of the folly and pernicious influence of the superstitions which prevailed amongst the Heathen, and which were gradually made to countenance every fraud and corruption.

The institutions of Numa were, probably, in many respects, more pure than those of later times. Livy mentions seven Greek books of wisdom to have been discovered in a field of Petilius, a scribe, on the Jarisculan hill, about A. U. 570, with a title intimating that they were taken from the chest of Numa. And he adds that they were burnt by order of the senate, as tending to the dissolution of religion. Selden conceives, that if they were the books of Numa, they contained principles of the Jewish religion*.

The account which the author gives of the introduction of the abominable rites of the Bacchanalians into Rome, A. U. C. 566 †, remarkably illustrates that extreme depravity resulting from the Heathen idolatry, which is strongly characterized by St. Paul ‡:

* Livy, lib. xl. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xiii. ch. 13.

† Lib. xxxix. § 8.

‡ Rom. i. 26.

and the cautious consideration with which the rites were suppressed, least any institutions of sacred authority should be mingled with them, demonstrates the deep reverence which the Roman people entertained for every thing supposed to be sanctioned by the gods.

The historian himself seems to have been strongly impressed with religious sentiments. He shews, indeed, so much regard even to portents and prodigies, (many of which might have been explained upon physical causes), that some have conceived him to have been deeply infected with credulity; while others imagine, that he details such superstitious vanities, only with design to shew by what delusions his countrymen had been misled. He himself informs us, that a disposition prevailed in his time, to disregard the reports of such preternatural events, but intimates that he felt a kind of reverence for antiquity, and a religious scruple, not to reject what men of sound judgment had deemed proper to be recorded*. Joseph Toland, under pretence of vindicating the historian, as many had before done, from the charge of superstition, endeavoured to constrain him into the list of infidels, as if, says Fabricius,

* Lib. xliii. § 13.

“ there could be no difference between a
 “ modest contemner of old women’s tales,
 “ and one who impiously tramples on the
 “ Deity, and on all religion ;” but, con-
 tinues he, “ Non opus puto multis cum eo
 “ contendere, cui ita periit frons, ut non
 “ erubescat Moysen venditare assertorem
 “ Spinosismi *.”

The history of Livy has a particular interest with respect to this work, in those parts which shew the preservation of some of the doctrines and observances of the patriarchal religion, and which exhibit customs which might seem to have originated in appointments of the Mosaic institution, though they are disguised and almost buried under the corruptions of Heathen superstition. The author mentions the early conviction which prevailed among the Romans, of the certain, though late infliction, of the Divine judgment for crimes †: the appropriation of a tenth part of the spoil to the gods ‡; the appointment of sanctuaries §; and the prohibition which restrained the priests from

* Fabric. Supplement, lib. i. c. 11.

† Lib. iii. § 56.

‡ Lib. v. § 21. compare with Gen. xiv. 20. Vid. Diod. Sicul. lib. xi. § 62. p. 451.

§ Lib. xxxv. § 51.

going to war*. The historian, in one passage of his work, uses the expression of “Numen Deorum,” the divinity or godhead of the gods†, thereby intimating, that the gods of the Heathen nations, though worshipped under an endless variety of forms and ceremonies, so as to appear almost different gods, were nevertheless really the same‡; and in confirmation of this account, it may be observed, that so far back as the time of Romulus, one supreme God was acknowledged as “the Father of gods and men,” “best and greatest§,” and that deified men, as Æneas, Romulus, and others, were called “Dii Indigetes||,” being regarded as tutelar deities having a local influence, and being styled “Terrestres¶,” as other deities were deemed Celestial, and others Infernal.

At a later period also, A. U. C. 415, the

* Lib. xxxvii. § 51. lib. xxviii. § 44.

† Lib. x. § 36.

‡ Lib. i. § 12. See also lib. xxviii. c. 12. and Cudworth, b. i. c. 4. p. 460. Edit. 1678.

§ Lib. i. § 12. In later times the same titles are ascribed to the supreme God. See lib. iii. § 17; lib. v. § 50; lib. ix. § 24.

|| Lib. i. § 2.

¶ Lib. i. § 32. See also lib. ii. § 2. and 1 Kings xx. 23.

Consul Titus Manlius Torquatus, in a sudden exclamation to the Senate and the people, expresses himself consistently with this statement:—"There is a celestial Deity; " thou dost exist great Jupiter; it is not in " vain that we have hallowed thee as the " Father of gods and men in this seat *," (the Capitol.) Cudworth refers also to another passage, which seems to prove, that the Romans in general entertained these persuasions in the year of Rome 579, since they were displeased with Quintus Fulvius Flaccus, because when Censor, he uncovered, in part, a temple dedicated to Juno Lacinia, among the Bruttii, and sent the marble tiles thereof to Rome, with design to adorn a new temple which he had erected there. Fulvius was in consequence publicly accused in the Senate upon a charge, that with the ruins of temples, he built up temples, as if there were not every where the same immortal gods, but that some of them might be honoured and adorned with the spoils of others; and it was unanimously decreed, that the tiles should be taken back †. It should be added, that the historian relates, that Flaccus, in the course of the following

* Lib. viii. § 6.

† Lib. xlii. § 3. and Cudworth, b. i. c. iv. p. 460.

year, destroyed himself, under the influence, it was supposed, of a Divine judgment inflicted upon him for his sacrilege.

Among other particulars, with respect to religious antiquities, which deserve to be noticed, we may remark, that Livy points out the self-devotion of individuals, in voluntary expiation or atonement, in order to avert the anger of the gods; and their bearing upon their dedicated heads the accumulated offences of the people, thereby conciliating forgiveness and favour *; circumstances which, considering the importance given to them by the historian, cannot fail to remind us of those solemnities of the Divine rite of expiation under the Mosaic dispensation, typifying the self-devotion of the great Redeemer of the world for the sins of all mankind. “And Aaron shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel, two kids of the goats for a sin-offering; and he shall cast lots upon the two goats, and the goat upon which the Lord’s lot fell, he shall offer for a sin-offering; but the goat on which the lot fell to be the scape goat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him,” and to

* Lib. vii. §. 6; lib. viii. § 9; lib. 10. § 28.

bear “all the iniquities of the children of
“ Israel, and all their transgressions in all
“ their sins” upon his head, “into the wil-
“ derness *.”

Again, in speaking of certain new and complicated rites of religion, which had invaded Rome, Livy states that foreign and unusual expiations by sacrifice of victims, for the purpose of imploring peace of the gods, had been introduced †. Thus establishing the fact, that this kind of atonement for sin was likewise solemnly made amongst the Romans, corresponding with those sacrifices of victims for atonement, which were in use by Divine appointment amongst the Jews. Many other examples from the Roman historian, corroborating the same fact ‡, might be brought forward. It may be observed, that from both of the above passages, we derive substantial authority in favour of the opinion, that the fundamental principle, not less of the Heathen, than of the Jewish ritual, was that mentioned by St. Paul, “without shedding of blood is no remis-
“ sion §.”

* Levit. xvi. 5. 8. 10. 21.

† Lib. v. § 16, 17.

‡ Lib. iv. § 30.

§ Heb. ix. 22.

CHAP. LI.

Caius Plinius Secundus Major.

PLINY was born at Verona, in the reign of Tiberius, A. D. 23, he enjoyed high and confidential offices under Vespasian. Being stationed with a fleet under his command at Misenum, A. D. 79, when the first important eruption of Mount Vesuvius took place, and being carried to the scene of danger, by a generous regard to the safety of the inhabitants of the vicinity, who were threatened with destruction, he lost his life by a sudden suffocation *, from the effect of noxious vapours which arose from the earth on which he had reclined.

Fabricius enumerates many productions of Pliny which are now lost.

His Natural History, which is his prin-

* Plin. Epist. lib. vi. xvi.

cipal work, was written, A. D. 77*, exhibiting the strongest proofs of his industry. It consists of 37 books, of which Harduin, without sufficient reason, supposes the first to be spurious†. From the variety of materials, compiled together with great industry and research, but not always with equal accuracy, some particulars of geographical detail, and natural history, may be found, illustrative of Scripture, but which are more suited for occasional comment than for any general description.

It may be observed, however, that in speaking of Judea, Pliny mentions that Jerusalem had been by far the most illustrious city, not of Judea alone, but of the East‡. He describes that country as divided, in his time, into ten Toparchs or Counties, one of which was that of Jericho, planted with the palm-tree; thus illustrating the propriety of the Scripture appellation of the City of Palm-trees§. He speaks of the river Jordan, as a pleasant stream, diffusing itself and meander-

* Plin. Præfat. ad Nat. Hist. et Fabric. Bib. Lat. Supplement, p. 404.

† Chronolog. V. T. p. 152.

‡ Lib. v. c. 14.

§ Deut. xxxiv. 3. Plin. lib. xiii. c. 4.

ing in its lengthened course, as if reluctant to throw itself into the Asphaltite lake (Dead Sea), by nature accursed, where at last its approved current is swallowed up in pestilential waters*. He represents Judæa as peculiarly distinguished for the production of the balsam †.

In the Acts of the Apostles, mention is made of certain vagabond Jews and Exorcists, who took upon them to call over evil spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus ‡, though, as it appears, without success. Some have thought that Pliny alludes to persons of this description, when he speaks of a magical faction, dependant on, and derived from Moses, Jamne, and Jotape, amongst the Jews §. It may be observed, that the historian seems to have considered the names of the magicians, who opposed Moses, as belonging to the adherents of that Divine legislator; alluding probably to the same persons whose opposition is referred to by St. Paul ||.

* Lib. v. c. 15.

† Lib. xii. c. 25. See also Strabo, l. xvi. p. 1073. 1085.

‡ Acts xix. 13.

§ Hist. Nat. lib. xxx. c. 1. p. 297. vol. i. Edit. Lug. Bat.

|| 2 Tim. iii. 8.

Pliny speaks of the Jews as a people distinguished for a contempt of the Heathen deities *, and he considers it as a mark of human weakness to frame an image and form of God †.

* Lib. xiii. c. 4.

† Lib. ii. c. 7.

CHAP. LII.

Aulus Persius Flaccus.

PERSIUS is supposed to have been born in the reign of Tiberius, A. D. 32, at Volaterra, in Etruria, though he himself seems to intimate that he was a Ligurian*. He is said to have been of the equestrian order. Persius appears to have been educated in the discipline of the Stoics, when the Epicurean principles prevailed at Rome, and when a degenerate people endeavoured to forget the loss of their ancient freedom in licentious pleasures. He and Lucan were disciples of Annæus Cornutus, whom he mentions with the affection of a grateful mind, as a man of Socratic dignity, by whose instructions he had been excited to activity and a love of

* Sat. vi. l. 6, 7. Euseb. Chron. et Fabricii, Biblioth. Latin. lib. ii. c. 12.

literature, in an age in which science and virtue were rapidly sinking into decay.

Persius has left only six Satires. Some of his productions were destroyed by direction of Cornutus, as not being sufficiently matured by their author, who died at the age of 32. He obtained, however, as Quintilian has observed, much honour by one book. Satirical dialogues were amongst the earliest productions of Rome, which were afterwards improved into dramatic representations; but the interlocutory form continued to be retained in ethical and didactic works. Ennius, Lucilius, Horace, and others, preceded Persius.

The satires of Persius, amidst the obscurity of a figurative style, abound with pointed and striking moral passages. His instructions are delivered in a mild tone of contemplative philosophy, though occasionally animated with that indignant spirit which afterwards appeared in the writings of Juvenal; and they are, in general, free from the offensive impurities which degrade the work of the latter writer. He describes, with peculiar effect, his contempt of the trappings displayed for popular deception without intrinsic and substantial virtue; re-

presenting the profligate to be so stupified, as not to know what he had lost, and so sunk in the depth of depravity, as never again to rise; and he addresses in forcible language, the Father of the gods, entreating him to punish oppressors by no other means than by making them “behold virtue and pine away with grief for having deserted it:”

“Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ*.”

The lines also, in which he exhorts wretched mortals to learn what they are, and for what they were created; what should be the object of their wishes; and what God had commanded them to be; indicate a mind directed to right objects.

Persius speaks of the prayers and sabbaths of the Jews, but does not appear to be aware of the importance of institutions which were expressive of a reverence for an eternal and immutable God, worshipped in mental contemplation †, without image, in the hallowed rest of the Sabbath, amidst the miserable superstitions which prevailed on every side ‡.

* Sat. iii. l. 30—38. See also line 40—44.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. v. c. 6.

‡ Sat. v. l. 184.

He mentions the celebration of the birth-day of Herod *, observed, as it should seem, at Rome, with illuminations, in a manner which implies the existence of numbers of the Jews in that city, who were distinguished by customs which must have excited much attention. The observances in this instance seem to have originated in the reverence which the Herodians entertained for Herod, whom they flattered as the person in whom the prophecies relating to the Shiloh were to be accomplished.

The books of Moses and of the Prophets were read, we know, wheresoever there were Jewish synagogues, and there are sufficient indications dispersed through the works of the Roman writers, to shew that they had some knowledge of the instruction which the Scriptures contain, though indeed that knowledge was very partial and defective, and appears in the Heathen representations under all the colourings of prejudice. The God, whom the Jews worshipped, is styled by Lucan (the associate of Persius) “the uncertain,” or unknown God †; and his abstract and spiritual perfections were in ge-

* Sat. v. l. 180.

† Pharsal. lib. ii. l. 593.

neral considered by the heathens, as too remote from human apprehension to become the objects of reverence in a religious service, so as to be productive of any practical effects on those who were led to worship them *.

Nevertheless Persius seems to have conceived more elevated and just views of religion, he reprehends the secret motives and illicit desires, which prompted the expensive sacrifices of his time †, giving vent to his indignation against those, whose hearts were bent only on earth, being devoid of all heavenly affections, and he enjoins a well-composed rectitude and piety in the hallowed recesses of the mind ‡.

Many of the pure precepts of devotion and holiness, which the Jews must have meditated upon in their affliction, and have sometimes proclaimed amidst the abominations which surrounded them, might have attracted regard; every sentence of Scripture has a sterling value, and it is evident that the reflections of Persius are particularly impressive, and rise into a higher strain

* Juvenal, Sat. xiv. l. 97. Tacit. Hist. lib. v. § 9. Florus Epit. lib. iii. c. 6.

† Sat. ii. l. 3.

‡ Sat. ii. l. 61, 62. 73—75.

when they seem to repeat the lessons of Scripture.

The line with which he commences his work, proclaiming the vanity of human cares, and the emptiness of human concerns,

“ O Curas Hominum ! ô quantum est in rebus inane ! ”

seems to bear a more than an accidental resemblance to the text with which Solomon opens his sublime reflections in the book of Ecclesiastes : “ Vanity of vanities,” saith the preacher, “ vanity of vanities ; all is vanity.” Persius appears, however, to apply in an unlimited sense, what Solomon uttered only with regard to the views of men, when not directed by the fear of God. The Heathen writer speaks of human affairs as defective in themselves, but the inspired teacher refers only to a vanity in the pursuits of men. There are other lines also of Persius, which deserve consideration. He reprehends in strong language those unthinking men, who, because the Deity did not inflict immediate punishment, imagined that he had overlooked or forgiven their impiety * ; and elsewhere

* Sat. ii. l. 24—30, compared with Psalm ii. 21.

he satirizes the suggestions of luxury, which, when prompting to indulgence, derives motives from the shortness of human life, exhorting its votaries to seize the present hour for enjoyment*.

* Sat. v. l. 151—153, compared with Prov. i. 24.

CHAP. LIIL.

Lucius Annæus Seneca.

SENECA, who was the son of Marcus Annæus Seneca, a native of Corduba, in Spain; of the equestrian order, and of whom some writings remain *, was appointed by Agrippina to be tutor of Nero, whose passions he for some time restrained, till becoming obnoxious to the tyrant, he fell a sacrifice to resentment or avarice, being compelled to inflict death upon himself.

Dion Cassius has given too much countenance to the charges which have been brought against Seneca. It may be collected from Tacitus and Juvenal, that the imputations thrown on his character, resulted, in great measure, from the calumnies of his enemies, encouraged by the rapacity of the

* Fabricius Biblioth. lib. ii. c. 9.

emperor, who coveted the possession of his accumulated wealth and splendid gardens*. It was difficult, in the court of Nero, to escape slanderous reflections.

The writings of Seneca, contain some of the best instructions of heathen morality, when it had been compelled to recede from many of its errors, and had conformed itself in some degree to the new principles introduced by the true religion: and their author illustrated, by the fortitude with which he endured reverse of fortune and exile, as well as by his death, which took place A. D. 65, the efficacy of those moral principles which he professed.

There can be little doubt, however, that this eminent moralist was acquainted with some of the communications of the Gospel, and that he conversed with some of the first preachers, who zealously propagated its doctrines. It is, in fact, extremely probable, and supported by some accounts, that he had intercourse with St. Paul, late in life, when the Apostle came to Rome and con-

* Sat. x. Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. § 52, 53. p. 186. Ed. Brotier, t. 2.

verted some of the household of Nero*. The eight epistles to St. Paul, which exist under the name of Seneca, and the six epistles represented to have been written by St. Paul to Seneca, seem to have been fabricated on traditionary accounts to this effect. They were composed at an early period, since they are quoted by St. Augustin and Jerome, and they were published at Naples and Venice in the 15th century, as well as by Erasmus at Basle, in 1515, by whom they are considered as unworthy of the name which they bear. Some writers have maintained that Seneca was himself a proselyte to Christianity; but there does not appear to be any sufficient ground for this opinion†. Many of Seneca's works have been transmitted to us, which treat particularly on those moral and religious subjects, which were discussed with so much interest, and under such enlarged views, after the promulgation of the Gospel, of which the doctrines were rapidly diffused. His three

* Philipp. iv. 22, and page 368 (vol. i.) of this work.

† Fr. Modius. Lect. Novantiqu. Epist. 21. Fabric. lib. ii. c. 9.

books on Anger, which he styles “*Brevem Insaniam* *,” and which he considers as the mark of a little mind, present us with a philosophical exposition of the nature, affects, and remedies of this passion.

His consolations, addressed to Helvia his mother, during his exile in Corsica, demonstrate the right affections and fortitude of his mind; and those offered to Polybius, on the death of his brother, though degraded by flattery to Claudius, whom he styles “*publicum omnium solatium* †,” suggest such reflections drawn from the events of life, as were adapted to his time.

Those to Marcia, concerning the loss of her son, exhibit, in different instances, the removal of good men from evils to come ‡, concurring to excite the religious conviction, which the admonition of Isaiah had enforced, in inspired instruction §. Seneca seems, in this book, to allude to the persecutions of the Christians, who were crucified

* *De Ira*. lib. i. cap. 1. Edit. Amstel. 1672. Var. Elz.

† Cap. 33. vol. i. p. 228.

‡ Cap. 20. p. 285—287.

§ Isaiah lvii. 1.

and impaled *: and he concludes it with a striking passage, in which he describes the final conflagration of the world, about to be renewed. “ Nos quoque felices animæ, et
 “ æterna fortitæ, cum Deo visum erit iterum
 “ ista moliri, labentibus cunctis, et ipsi
 “ parva ruinæ ingentis accessio, in antiqua
 “ elementa vertemur. Felicem filium tuum
 “ Marcia, qui ista jam novit †.”

In his book on Providence, he considers the interesting question, why many evils happen to good men: and he appears to offer the same solution which a Christian would have given, representing afflictions to be dealt out with a view to discipline ‡.

Seneca was more addicted to the Stoical principles than was compatible with Christianity; he suffered, however, the mild spirit of the Gospel to mitigate somewhat of their severity. Having derived consolation to himself and others, from the cultivation of philosophy, when living with frugal and secluded

* Cap. 20. p. 284. see also Epist. 14. Lipsius ad annal. Tacit. 14. et Gruter. lib xix. c. 12.

† Consol. ad Marc. c. 26. p. 300.

‡ De Providentia, § 1. p. 304. Heb. xii. 6, 7, and page 229 (vol. i.) of this work.

habits in banishment, he continued to solicit its aid when restored to prosperity, and surrounded with the splendid luxuries of the imperial palace. He professes in his work, “*De Tranquillitate Animi*,” to have been pleased with the honours and distinctions which he enjoyed, not for purposes of ostentation, but that he might be more useful to his friends and relations, to the citizens, and to all mankind *. He appears to have looked down with the feelings of a superior mind, upon those who sought to relieve the lassitude of their lives only by variety of amusement and a change of scene †: and he devoted himself to the production of useful works, inculcating the precepts by which a wise man might maintain constancy under all circumstances ‡; recommending clemency to Nero §, whose disposition in his youth afforded some hope that he might be influenced by principles of virtue.

In his book “*De Brevitate Vitæ*,” he maintains that it is our misconduct which occasions the shortness of life to be lamented :

* Cap. 1. p. 338.

† Cap. 2. p. 345.

‡ See his work *De Constantiâ Sapientis*.

§ Vide the two books *De Clementiâ*.

and in his book “*De Vitâ Beatâ*,” he makes happiness consist in virtue ; and speaks of God as the Governor of the Universe *.

Amidst the dignities which he enjoyed, he seems to have looked with fondness to ease and retirement ; and in his work “*De Otio*,” “*aut Secessu Sapientis*,” he maintains them to be consistent with the duties of a wise man.

His seven books “*De Beneficiis*,” which are written without much method, contain a variety of just reflections on benefits, and on the reciprocal duties of those who bestow, and those who receive them ; representing benefits to derive their value from the intention of the donor, and as producing in those who confer them, a resemblance to the gods † : and he observes that the mind will find materials for liberality, even in the most confined circumstances ‡. He considers obligations as discharged by the feelings of a

* Cap. 8. p. 535. It may be observed, that this work is addressed to Gallio, his brother, whose name was changed from Marcus Annæus Novatus, for that of Lucius Junius Gallio, and who is generally supposed to have been the Roman deputy or proconsul before whom St. Paul was accused, See Acts xviii. 12. et Tacit. Annals, lib. xv. § 73.

† Lib. iii. c. 15.

‡ Lib. i. c. 3.

grateful disposition *. He combats the Epicurean principles with respect to the indifference of the gods †; and represents them, and especially him whom he styles “Deus Optimus Maximus ‡,” as constant in his decrees, as conferring blessings on the bad, as well as on the good; because those different characters here cannot be separated §. Amidst some abstract and speculative principles, in which he contends for a gratuitous love of virtue, he mentions the “insitum mortalitati vitium ||;” and observes, that it is very probable that the gods treat some men with indulgence, on account of the disposition of their fathers and grandfathers; carrying this opinion to a much greater extent than is sanctioned by Scripture ¶.

The six books on declamatory topics, were probably only digested, by Seneca, as they appear by their subjects and style to have been composed at an earlier period than that

* Lib. ii. c. 35.

† Lib. iv. c. 4.

‡ Lib. iv. c. 7.

§ Liv. iv. c. 28.

|| Lib. ii. c. 26. See also lib. iii. c. 25.

¶ Lib. iv. c. 32. Compare with Exod. xx. 5.

in which he lived *. They are imperfect, but seem to have been designed as scholastic exercises, to instruct students in the art of rhetoric ; containing suggestions and divisions of subjects, to assist in the arrangement of speeches before the senate, and at the bar. They do not afford any thing with which we are at present concerned †.

The seven books on natural questions, which relate chiefly to meteorology, and in which he represents “ man as contemptible, “ unless he rise above earthly things ‡ ;” a lively satire on the Emperor Claudius ; a large collection of epistles ; and ten tragedies, with some fragments, compose the remainder of Seneca’s works : some of the tragedies are deemed spurious.

* See Andr. Schottus. Præf. ad Lib. Suasoriarum, apud Senec. Op. tom. iii. et Fabric. Biblioth.

† Declamation appears to have prevailed in Greece after those productions of eloquence, which had been called forth by energetic feelings, and animating contests, had established some standards which served as models for study. Cicero, whose powers agitated the whole frame of Cæsar, had declaimed at Rhodes and in Greece, and continued to exercise his judgment and talents in pleading before Cassius and Dolabella, when civil dissensions precluded him from forensic application, and the art which Seneca illustrates was professed by Suetonius and others at Rome.

‡ Nat. Quæst. lib. i. Præf.

The *Medæa* has generally been considered as genuine; and Quintilian mentions a play under that title, written by Seneca. It is worthy of remark, however, that the present play under that name contains a passage which seems to have reference to the discovery of the Western Continent; and which, if we allow it to have been written before the disclosure of the new world, must be regarded as a singularly happy conjecture, framed from reflection, on the form and general circumstances of the earth. The lines are as follow :

“ Venient annis sæcula seris,
 Quibus oceanus vincula rerum
 Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
 Tethysque novos detegat orbes;
 Nec sit terris ultima Thule*.”

The writings of Seneca, particularly his later productions, improved by the spirit of Christianity, exhibit a display of religious and moral truth, which may afford instruction to every age. In works produced at a period, improved by the dawn of revealed knowledge, we are not surprized to meet with many just and noble sentiments, with

* Ac. ii. l. 375.

respect to the attributes and government of the supreme God *, acknowledged as the First Cause, and Governor of the world ; or with regard to the gross superstition of Seneca's time, of which he strongly reprobates the absurd customs, as conspicuous even in the Capitol †. We easily understand also, that the respect which he paid to the ignoble crowd of deities who were worshipped, was manifested rather in conformity to his supposed duty as a senator, for the sake of example ‡ than from any belief in the reality of their existence ; and that, as St. Augustin states, “ *colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat §.*” Equally consistent with the convictions which we might have expected to prevail in the mind of Seneca, are the declarations which he makes with respect to Providence, the immortality of the soul, and the expectation of future happiness : the effect of which, however, is sometimes diminished by erro-

* Epist. 31. with Heb. xi. 3. Epist. 41. and Gen. xxi. 22. Epist. 58. Psalm civ. 30. Epist. 65. Gen. i. 31. Epist. 93. Matt. viii. 20. i. 29. xi. 12.

† August. de Civit. Dei. lib. v. c. 10. Tertull. Apologet. c. 12. p. 13. Edit. Paris. 1664.

‡ 2 Kings v. 18.

§ August. lib. v. c. 10.

neous opinions, exhibiting the lingering errors of philosophy, particularly on the subject of suicide *.

The passages are numerous, especially in the Epistles, which indicate an acquaintance with the instructions of Scripture. He inculcates, in a remarkable manner, the propriety of prayer for wisdom †; and the necessity of a regard to our eternal welfare. He observes, that we die daily ‡, and excites men to a contempt of death, on the consideration that we have no limited, or temporary existence §. He expresses a desire of liberating the soul from the servitude of the body ||. He enforces the propriety of living for others ¶: and speaks of the return of the spirit to the gods **, of the restoration to life ††, and of the future contemplation of the glories which we now see indistinctly, and

* Epist. 24. Consol ad Marc. c. 22. et de Vit. Beat. c. 19.

† Epist. 10. compare with 1 Kings iii. 9. and James i. 5.

‡ Epist. 1. and 102. compare with 1 Cor. xv. 31.

§ Epist. 102. compare with Hebrews xiii. 14.

|| Epist. 65. and 120. compare with Rom. viii. 21, 22.

¶ Epist. 48. compare with Acts iv. 32. 2 Cor. v. 1—5. and Rom. xiv. 7.

** Epist. 102. compare with Eccclus. xii. 7.

†† Epist. 36. compare with 1 Cor. xv. 52.

only in part*; recommending that fortitude and noble confidence of the mind, which, resting on such prospects, is not to be terrified by any enemies, or discouraged by any circumstances†. In addition to which, many other passages might be referred to, containing a general resemblance, in thought or expression, to texts of Scripture‡.

Seneca appears in a work referred to by St. Austin to have censured the Jews for losing a seventh part of their time, by the observance of the Sabbath§. It is singular that the Heathens should not have been sensible of the benefits of such a suspension of the struggles and contests of life, and of such an intermission to allay and moderate the excesses of human passion, even as to its immediate influence on civil and domestic so-

* Epist. 102. and 65. compare with 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

† Epist. 102. Luke xii. 5. Matt. x. 28. Epist. 16. and Prov. iii. 5.

‡ Epist. 8. and John viii. 32. 56. Galat. iii. i. Epist. 46. Rom. xii. 17. Epist. 16. and 2 Cor. xiii. 5. and James i. 22. Epist. 17. and 2. iv. 17. Epist. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 25. Epist. 31. Acts xvii. 29. Epist. 38. and Matt. xiii. 31. Epist. 93. Ephes. iv. 16. John xv. 1—6. Epist. 120. 2 Pet. i. 19. et passim. Epist. 102. Psalm xlv. 6. Job i. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 7.

§ August. de Civit. Dei. lib. vi. c. 11.

ciety. It is the devoting of the Sabbath, however, to a contemplation of the divine attributes, and to the cultivation and expression of religious affections, which renders the appointment most valuable. Carrying with it divine authority, and manifesting good effects wherever it was set apart, its establishment was at length secured. Seneca observing that it spread over the world, and that the vanquished thereby gave laws to the conquerors, remarks, that though the greater part of the people knew not what they did, yet that the Jews were sensible of the cause of their rites*.

Seneca seems to be unwilling to mention the Christians, being conscious, it is supposed, that they merited commendations which he could not venture to express. It has been noticed, that he alludes to the sufferings to which they were exposed, in what was called the *Tunica molesta*, a vestment formed of combustible materials, and smeared with unctuous preparations, with which they were covered, and which when they were secured to a stake, was set on fire†.

* August. de Civitate Dei, lib. v. c. 11. l. vii. c. 10.

† Seneca, Epist. 14.

He seems to speak of them as rejoicing in being burned, and bound in chains, and slain*.

It is remarkable that Seneca observes, that “ if one were to rise from the dead, and to “ inform us upon his own experience, that “ there is no evil in death, he would obtain “ more credit, and have greater weight with “ us than an ordinary teacher † !” This remark, however, only leads us to reflect, how erroneous often are the convictions of men, and how just the observation of our Saviour, “ that if men believe not Moses “ and the Prophets, neither would they be “ persuaded though one rose from the dead.” Seneca himself, who must have heard of the resurrection of Christ, does not appear to have examined its evidence, or to have been duly impressed by it.

* Epist. 71. and Heb. xi. 35.

† Epist. 30. p. 114. Edit. Amstel. See Morell's trans. vol. i. p. 112. and Luke xvi. 31.

CHAP. LIV.

Caius Cornelius Tacitus.

TACITUS, who was the son of Cornelius Tacitus, a procurator and governor of one of the provinces of Belgic Gaul, was born in the reign of Nero, A. D. 62; and enjoyed high offices in the successive reigns of Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan.

The History of Tacitus was published in the reign of Trajan, when the unrestrained feelings of the mind were expressed without fear. It exhibited a succession of twenty-seven years, from the commencement of the reign of Galba, A. D. 69, to the death of Domitian, a period rendered awful by frequent revolutions of empire, effected chiefly by the Prætorian bands, who raised up the objects of their choice to a short-lived and precarious power. The work consisted ori-

ginally of thirty books, of which only four, and a part of the fifth, remain, recording but little after the accession of Vespasian.

The Annals, composed afterwards, included a period of fifty-four years, from A. D. 14, to the death of Nero in A. D. 68. Three years of Tiberius; the four years of Caligula; the six first of Claudius; and the two last of Nero, have perished. The works here mentioned, the Dialogue on Oratory, and the Treatise de Moribus Germanorum, produced A. D. 99, in the reign of Trajan; together with the Life of Agricola, published also in the same reign, contain all that remains of this historian; who, for depth of philosophical remark, for striking description of character, for animated and dramatic representations of events, is the most distinguished of any that antiquity can boast. He shews an intimate knowledge of the heart; but having occasion to treat of times, and characters, of peculiar corruption, he seems to delight in aggravating the shades of human depravity.

The impressions in favour of morality, which he excites, are produced by a contemplation of the misery, and dreadful effects, of an unrestrained indulgence of the passions. He introduces few reflections on Providence,

and has been sometimes accused of atheism ; but there are passages which sufficiently demonstrate his belief in the government of a Supreme Being, administering retributive judgments on earth ; and he exhibits the influence of conscience producing superstitious fears and gloomy apprehensions *. Tacitus, however, though he speaks with reverence of Jupiter, “ greatest and best,” and represents the gods as propitious to virtue †, yet seems to have entertained very erroneous notions of the Divine nature as if acting from revenge ‡.

Considering the respect with which the works of Tacitus were regarded by the Ancients, and that the Emperor Tacitus in particular directed them, as the valuable productions of his ancestor, to be placed in all the libraries of Rome, and to be transcribed ten times every year into the Archives of the Consuls, it is somewhat surprizing that they should not have been more completely preserved ; especially if we reflect on the importance of the evidence which they afford in confirmation of the sacred accounts.

* Annal. 15. § 36.

† Histor. lib. iii. § 72.

‡ Histor. lib. i. § 3. See also Lucan. Pharsal. lib. iv. l. 107. and even Cicero De Nat. Deor. lib. iii. § 32. et seq.

Availing ourselves of what remains, and adverting first to relations which substantiate particulars mentioned in the Old Testament, we may observe, that when the historian speaks of the plains in which Sodom and Gomorrah stood, he states, after other writers*, that they were “reported to have
 “ been formerly fruitful, and inhabited by
 “ the population of great cities, which were
 “ burnt up by fire darted from heaven; that
 “ traces of this destruction were to be discovered in his time, since the earth itself
 “ appeared scorched, and to have lost its
 “ fruitfulness; so that all things, whether of
 “ spontaneous growth, or sown by the hand,
 “ either in the blade or flower, or matured
 “ to their accustomed form, became black
 “ and empty, and mouldered, as it were,
 “ into ashes.” He confesses himself disposed to admit, “that as distinguished cities
 “ had formerly been burnt (in that spot) by
 “ celestial flames, so also the earth had become infected by the vapours of the
 “ lake†, and the whole surrounding atmosphere been corrupted; insomuch,

* Gen. xiv. 1—3; and Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 764.

† Gen. xiv. 3.

“ that the productions of the harvest and
 “ autumn became putrid under a soil and
 “ climate equally pernicious *.”

The accounts which the historian gives of the Jews, are often strange, and improbable, and even contain palpable contradictions. He possibly received some information concerning this people from Josephus; but he had recourse also to other authorities, less respectable, or he perverted the reports which he received, in accommodation to popular errors, coinciding with his own prejudices.

Tacitus commences his account with the observation, that as he was about to relate the last days of a distinguished city, it was proper to lay open its origin. Upon this subject, he mentions many opinions which prevailed, two of which appear to have been built principally upon a resemblance of names, the one representing the Jews to

* Histor. l. v. c. 7. Gen. xix. 25. Deut. xxix. 23; and Hasselquist, who says, that only one fetid plant grew there. Murphy, in his translation, has perverted the account of Tacitus, by inserting a passage about natural causes, which is not in the original. The lake covered a plain where cities stood. Gen. xiv. 3.

have fled from Ida in Crete*, the other stating them to have been the Solymi, mentioned by Homer†. Tacitus adverts likewise to reports, which described the Jews to have been of Æthiopic or Egyptian origin, emigrating from the latter country under the guidance of Hierosolymus and Juda‡; and to others, which, with more consistency and truth, affirm them to have been Assyrian strangers, who, being in want of a country, first obtained a settlement in Egypt§, and afterwards established themselves in Judea and in the neighbouring parts of Syria. Recurring again to erroneous accounts||, he states that “a pestilence

* *Histor. l. v. c. 3.* The Cretans were rather derived from the Jews; see Brotier's *Tacitus, not. et emend. v. i. p. 538.*

† *Iliad, l. vii. v. 184.* Homer here speaks of the inhabitants of Æthiopia or Pisidia. See also *Odysse. l. v. v. 284.* and Brotier, *not. et emend.*

‡ The Æthiopians boasted of the highest antiquity, and some memorials of them existed in Judea, particularly at Joppa, where Andromeda was said to have been exposed to the sea-monster; but they were of more recent origin than the Egyptians. Vide *Diod. Sic. l. iii. et Bochart Geograph. Sacr. p. i. l. 4. c. 26.*

§ *Gen. xi. 31.*

|| Those of Chremen, Lysimachus, Justin, Diodorus Sica-

“ having arisen in Egypt, which affected the
 “ bodies of men, King Boccharis, upon
 “ consulting the oracle of Jupiter Ammon
 “ for relief, was commanded to purify his
 “ kingdom, by transporting a race of men
 “ odious to the gods into other lands; that
 “ in consequence, the whole multitude being
 “ sought for, and collected together and
 “ abandoned in vast deserts, Moses, one of
 “ their number, persuaded the rest, who
 “ were rendered torpid by their grief, not
 “ to wait for the assistance of gods or men,
 “ as they were deserted by both, but to
 “ trust to him as to a celestial guide, by
 “ whose aid, in the first instance, they
 “ might have warded off their miseries*.”

Tacitus proceeds to relate, that “ the people
 “ assented to this proposition, and that
 “ being entirely ignorant what course was
 “ to be pursued, they set forward on a for-
 “ tuitous journey; that nothing distressed
 “ them so much as a want of water; that
 “ being, in consequence, exhausted and
 “ stretched on the ground, ready to expire,

lus, Plutarch, and others. See Gale's Court of the Gen-
 tiles.

* See Exod. ii. 11. et seq.

“ a herd of wild asses * returning from pas-
 “ ture, retired to a rock shaded with a
 “ grove † of trees, whereupon Moses having
 “ followed them, and conjectured from the
 “ verdure of the herbage, that there would
 “ be water, discovered and opened large
 “ sources of it to the people ; that after this
 “ relief, they proceeded on a journey of six
 “ successive days, and on the seventh,
 “ having driven away the cultivators of the
 “ land, obtained possession of it, in which
 “ they built and dedicated a city and a
 “ temple ‡.”

The historian further adds, that “ Moses,
 “ with a view to confirm the Jews in subjec-
 “ tion to him, introduced among them new
 “ rites, different from those of other mor-
 “ tals, rendering all things profane to them
 “ which were deemed sacred by others, and
 “ on the other hand, allowing among them
 “ what was esteemed incestuous by other
 “ people.” He asserts “ that the image of
 “ the animal, by the guidance of which they
 “ had extricated themselves from their diffi-
 “ culty and thirst, was consecrated by them

* Compare with Exod. xv. 22. See also Gen. xxxvi. 24.

† Exod. xv. 17.

‡ Hist. l. v. § 3.

“ in the sanctuary *: that they slew a ram,
 “ as if in contempt of Ammon; and sacri-
 “ ficed an ox, which the Egyptians worship
 “ ped as Apis: that they abstained from
 “ swine’s flesh, in memory of the destruction
 “ with which the leprosy had formerly dis-
 “ graced them, to which disease that animal
 “ is particularly liable: that, by frequent
 “ fasts, they still commemorated the long
 “ famine which they had formerly sus-
 “ tained †: and that the Jewish bread,
 “ being unleavened, retained a proof of the
 “ haste with which they had carried off their
 “ corn ‡.” He affirms that “ they took de-
 “ light in the rest of the seventh day, be-
 “ cause that day produced to them an end
 “ of their labours §; and that afterwards, by
 “ the seductive influence of idleness, they
 “ devoted also the seventh year to inacti-
 “ vity ||: that others related, that this ho-
 “ nour was paid to Saturn, either derived

* See this contradicted by Tacitus himself in the same
 book, c. 5. See also Dio. Cass. l. xxxvii. c. 17. p. 122.
 Joseph. cont. Apion, l. ii. c. 17. Fuller’s Miscell. Theolog.
 l. iii. c. 8. Gen. xxxvi. 24.

† Sueton. August. 86. and Martial. Epig. 4. 4.

‡ Exod. xii. 39. Deut. xvi. 3.

§ Exod. xx. 8. 11. xxxi. 13. Deut. v. 14.

|| Exod. xxiii. 10. Levit. xxv. 4. See also Levit. xxv. §

“ from the inhabitants of Ida, their proge-
 “ nitors, who are said to have been expelled
 “ with Saturn, and from whom they received
 “ their principles of religion; or because,
 “ out of the seven stars by which mortals
 “ are governed, that of Saturn revolves in
 “ the highest orb, and with the chief power;
 “ and that most of the celestial bodies regu-
 “ late their influence, and complete their
 “ course, by the number seven.”

The historian observes, that “ these rites,
 “ however first introduced, were supported
 “ by their antiquity; that other unhallowed
 “ and impure institutes prevailed, through
 “ the depravity of the people*; for that
 “ every worthless man, despising the religion
 “ of the country in which he lived, heaped
 “ up tributes and offerings at Jerusalem, by
 “ which means the power of the Jews was
 “ increased, and the more so from their
 “ strong attachment and ready compassion
 “ towards each other, and their hostile ha-
 “ tred towards all others†:” He affirms

* Ezek. viii.

† This calumny originated probably in the extirpation of the inhabitants of Canaan. See the falsehood of it in Jeremiah xxix. 7. 1 Maccabees viii. 1. The Jews still pray on the Sabbath for the Princes under whom they live.

that “ they did not eat or intermarry with
 “ other people* : that their race was most
 “ addicted to lust : that they abstained from
 “ licentious intercourse with strange women,
 “ but that among themselves no intercourse
 “ was illicit † : that they instituted circum-
 “ cision as a distinctive rite : that proselytes
 “ to their faith adopted the same custom,
 “ and were embued with nothing more early,
 “ than to despise the Gods, to divest them-
 “ selves of attachment to their country, and
 “ to esteem their parents, their children,
 “ and their brethren, as vile ‡ ; yet that it
 “ was an object of their policy to increase
 “ their numbers, for that it was a crime
 “ amongst them for any parent to kill his
 “ children ; and that they believed the souls
 “ of those who died in battle, or under
 “ persecution, to be immortal § ; that hence
 “ arose a desire of multiplying children,
 “ and a contempt of death : that it was
 “ their custom, in the Egyptian manner,
 “ to bury their dead, rather than to burn

* Deut. vii. 3. Joshua xxiii. 12.

† Deut. xxii. 21. xxii. 2. Joseph. cont. Apion. l. ii.
 c. 24—30.

‡ Selden de Jur. Natur. et Gent. 2—4. et seq.

§ Selden, ibid. 7—9. p. 829—831.

“ them ; and that they entertained the same
 “ persuasion, and the same solicitude, with
 “ that people, concerning the infernal, but
 “ differed from them with respect to the
 “ celestial state.”

Tacitus goes on to remark, that “ the
 “ Egyptians venerated most animals, and
 “ their fabricated images : that the Jews
 “ conceived only one Deity, and him, only
 “ in the mind, esteeming those profane, who
 “ formed images of the Gods with perish-
 “ able materials, and in the likeness of men ;
 “ for that the lofty and eternal * God was
 “ neither mutable, or liable to decay, and
 “ that therefore there were no images in their
 “ city, and much less in their temples † :
 “ that this homage of images was not allowed
 “ to Kings or to the Cæsars : that as their
 “ priests played in chorus with pipes and tim-
 “ brels, and were crowned with wreaths of
 “ ivy, and as a golden vine was found in their
 “ temples, it was by some inferred that they
 “ worshipped Bacchus the conqueror of the
 “ East, though the Jewish Institutes had not
 “ any conformity with those of the Heathen

* Isaiah lvii. 15.

† Hist. lib. v. § 5. Dio. Cass. lib. xxxvii. § 17. p. 122.

“ God, he having established festive and
 “ cheerful rites, but the customs of the Jews
 “ being absurd and sordid.”

These accounts of the Roman historian, evidently tinctured with the strongest prejudice, betray the injurious representations of the avowed enemies of the Jews. Many of them had been distinctly refuted, in the time of Tacitus, by Josephus, and other historians. They contain in themselves sufficient to shew how full of errors they are; and while they exhibit much truth blended with falsehood, they tend to establish the former, without conferring any shadow of probability upon the latter.

Tacitus having, as has been before observed*, spoken of the exuberant fertility, and great population of Judea, of the immense opulence of its temple, and the reverential observances imposed with respect to it, proceeds to state some particulars relating to the Jews, after the time that they were in subjection to the Assyrians. He adverts to the attempt of Antiochus to abolish the Jewish rites: to the re-establishment of the

* See page 198, vol. i. of this work.

Jewish monarchy *, united with the Sacerdotal authority, in the decline of the Macedonian, and in the infancy of the Parthian power, at a period marked by proscriptions, destruction, and intestine discord. He states that the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed † by Pompey, (before Christ 63); that in the civil wars which succeeded, when the provinces fell under the power of Mark Anthony, the Parthians, under Pacorus, took possession of Judea; that upon their repulse, Judea was again subdued by Caius Sosius, and the kingdom given by Anthony to Herod, and confirmed with enlarged powers by Augustus; that after some seditious proceedings, suppressed by Quinctilius Varus, Judea was divided among the three sons of Herod; that upon the attempt of Caligula to erect his statute in the temple, a rebellion of the Jews took place, which upon the death of Caligula subsided; that the Jewish kings being dead, or reduced to a moderate power, Claudius committed the government to Roman knights or freedmen, among whom An-

* Hist. l. v. c. 8.

† The walls were restored under Claudius, to whom the Jews paid money for permission to renew their fortifications.

tonius Felix exercised the royal authority, with a servile mind, in all cruelty and lust; he represents him to have married Drusilla, the grand-daughter of Cleopatra and Anthony, who, it should be observed, was a different person from Drusilla, the sister of Agrippa, whom Felix afterwards married*.

After informing us that the Jews patiently endured oppression till the time of Gessius Florus, when a war arose, which was carried on with various success, and most frequently with adverse circumstances, Tacitus proceeds to describe the appointment of Vespasian by Nero to the chief command, who in two summers, subdued the open country and all the cities of Judea, excepting Jerusalem; and at length, after some interruption, (occasioned by the civil war between Galba, Otho and Vitellius, which led to his peaceable possession of the empire in Italy), he entrusted the care of the army to his son Titus, who drew out his legions before the walls of Jerusalem.

Tacitus relates, that the Jews maintained a doubtful contest for some days with the Roman cavalry and light armed troops, and

* Vide Brotier in Loc. et Stemma. Herodum. N. 12.

then retired within the walls, when the ever memorable seige commenced, of which every circumstance that is described tends to demonstrate the exact and literal accomplishment of the prophecies, which had been uttered with respect to it ; first by the Jewish prophets, and afterwards more particularly by our Saviour.

It is unnecessary to extract the whole account, furnished by Tacitus, which relates only to the commencement of the siege ; that part of the history, which described the taking of the city being unfortunately lost, though an abridgement of the principal circumstances, as collected from Josephus and other historians, is well supplied by Brotier.

Confining ourselves to what Tacitus has related, and adverting chiefly to such circumstances as are particularly connected with the completion of prophecy, it should be remarked that he states, that the impatience of Titus, and of the soldiers, was restrained by the situation of the city, rendered difficult of access by the surrounding hills and rocks, by its towers of a stupendous elevation, (some of which were not less than a hundred and twenty feet in height ;) and by the temple itself, which on one side formed

an admirable fortification. The historian paints in striking colours the great concourse of people collected at Jerusalem from the destruction of the other cities of Judea ; the internal dissensions and factions which prevailed, and which produced battles, conflagrations and massacres in the city, till the different parties were constrained by the hostile attack, to unite for the common defence.

Heathen writers are so accustomed to speak of portents and prodigies, as accompanying and encreasing the solemnity of great events, that perhaps less importance may be sometimes attached to what Tacitus relates concerning them upon this occasion, than it really merits. We cannot, however, but advert to the circumstances, which he, (as well as Josephus,) describes with respect to conflicting armies and glittering weapons seen in the air ; the sudden light issuing from the clouds, which illumined the temple ; the bursting open of its portals ; the more than human voice which was heard ; and the apparent commotion of the departing Deities ; and not call to mind what our Saviour declared, that “ fearful sights and great signs

“ from Heaven *,” should mark that period in which “ the desolation” of Jerusalem would be “ nigh.”

Tacitus observes, that few were impressed with terror by the prodigies, most of the Jews being persuaded that it was foretold in the ancient writings of the priests, that about this time the East should prevail †, and that they who should go forth from Jerusalem, should possess the dominion of the world ; which ambiguous prophecies, Tacitus, with adulation more natural than that of Josephus, applies to Vespasian and Titus. He confesses, however, that the multitude interpreted the predictions to import a greatness of dominion to be conferred on themselves, and could not be drawn from that opinion by adversity. The flatterers of Vespasian seem to have been desirous, not only of challenging for him the honours of prophecy, but likewise of investing him with the power of performing miracles ; a disposition excited

* Luke xxi. 11. 20. Matt. xxiv.

† Hist. l. v. c. 13. It has been before observed that the expression under which the Messiah is described by Zechariah, and which in our version is rendered the Branch, is in the Septuagint translated the East. Zach. vi. 12. *Ανατολή εν σμα αβελ*. See p. 295, note †, vol. i. of this work.

probably in Judea, of which every part had been the scene of some miracle.

Tacitus mentions that during Vespasian's stay at Alexandria, one of the common people, who was known to be suffering from a disease in his eyes, approached him, and fell at his knees, earnestly entreating him to cure his blindness, and professing to make his application in consequence of an admonition from the God Serapis, whom the Egyptian nation, addicted as it was to superstition, held in the greatest veneration. The man implored the Emperor that he would condescend to anoint his cheeks and the balls of his eyes with his spittle. Another, who had lost the use of his hand, by the suggestion of the same Divinity, besought that it might be trod upon by the foot of the Emperor. Vespasian, we are told, at first made light of their proposal; but they pressing him, he, first fearing the reproach of vanity, and again entertaining hope, through the earnest entreaties of the persons themselves, and the words of his flatterers, at length ordered the physicians to give their opinion, whether such a blindness and debility were capable of being healed by human aid. The physicians, with various

arguments, maintained, that in the instance of one of the persons, the faculty of sight was not decayed, and that it would return if the hindrances to it were removed; that the joints of the other, which had become disabled, might be restored, if a healing power were applied: that perhaps such a cure was in the contemplation of the Gods, and the Emperor chosen for it, by Divine appointment: in short, that the reputation of a perfected cure would accrue to him, whilst the ridicule of an unsuccessful attempt would fall upon the wretched persons themselves. Vespasian, deeming every thing attainable by his fortune, and that there was nothing impossible in the business, with a pleasant countenance, whilst the multitude stood around in eager expectation, obeyed the mandate of the Divinity; immediately the disabled hand was restored to its use, and the blind man recovered his sight. Persons who were present, (observes the historian), relate both these facts, even now when they have no interest to state a falsehood. Upon comparing this relation with the account of Suetonius, there will be reason to suspect that all the circumstances were contrived by the ad-

herence to the Flavian family, without the interference of any supernatural power*.

Tacitus, in speaking of the German nations, represents the Semnones, who were the head of the Suevian nation, to have adored God, as the ruler of all things †. (*Regnator omnium Deus*). They probably derived their conviction upon this fundamental point of faith, from their Scythian ancestors. The Deity, however, was worshipped amongst them with sanguinary rites, and human victims; and it is remarkable, that none were allowed to enter the consecrated groves, but in chains, expressive of the bonds of guilt in which they were holden, and rolling themselves on the ground, in conscious sense of unworthiness, not presuming to rise, from a reverence of the attributes of their Deity ‡. The historian mentions also, that in that part of the country of the Suevians, where the rites of Isis were observed, the figure of a ship was revered, indicating that their religion was

* Hist. lib. iv. c. 81. Vide Brotier. et Lupanus, ad loc.

† The inhabitants of Pomerania and Brandenburgh. See Brotier. not. in loc. See also Hist. § 9.

‡ *Eoquē omnis superstitio respicit.* De Mor. Ger. § 39 et 9.

of foreign importation. The ship might possibly be a symbol of the Ark *.

The accounts which Tacitus gives of the Christians, afford the most striking testimony to the facts on which their religion rests, and exhibit affecting evidence of the sufferings to which the early converts were exposed under persecution. He states that Nero, “ in order to put a stop to the rumour, that he had directed the burning of Rome, charged the Christians as being the authors of that atrocious act, and inflicted exquisite tortures upon them, whom he represents to have been already odious for their offences. The historian remarks, that they took the name of Christians from Christus, the author of their sect, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had been exposed to punishment by Pontius Pilate, the procurator †. This detestable superstition, as he styles it, being by these means suppressed for a time, afterwards

* See § 9.

† The title of Procurator seems to have been equivalent to Questor. In general he had not the power of life and death, but Pilate had this power, as we learn from Philo and Josephus. These writers therefore collectively confirm the accuracy of the evangelic account, Christ being brought as a malefactor to Pilate. John xviii. 29, 30.

“ broke out again, not only in Judea,
 “ where the evil first originated, but in the
 “ city of Rome also, where every thing
 “ abominable and disgraceful flowed, and
 “ was encouraged. They were first seized
 “ who were disposed to confess, and then
 “ upon their information a great multitude
 “ was convicted, not so much for the crime
 “ of the fire, as for their hatred of the hu-
 “ man race*.” He represents that mock-
 ery was added to encrease the sufferings of
 those who perished, for that, being covered
 with the skins of wild beasts, they were torn
 to pieces by dogs, or affixed to crosses, or
 set on fire; and when the day failed, were
 made to serve as torches to illumine the city
 by night †. Nero had opened his gardens
 for this spectacle, and added the games of the
 Circus, mixing with the common people in
 the habit of a charioteer, or appearing seated
 in his car; upon which commiseration arose
 towards these men, who, though guilty in
 the opinion of Tacitus, and deserving to suffer
 the severest punishment, appeared to fall a

* Annal. lib. xv. c. 44. Et Epist. Plin. Sulpic. Sever. l. ii. c. 41.

† Juvenal, s. 1. l. 159. and Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, v. i. p. 359. Edit. Kippis.

sacrifice not for the public good, but to gratify the cruelty of the Emperor *.

The prejudices of Tacitus, which manifestly appear to have mingled in this account, only strengthen the impression which it must excite, since we perceive that it admits the crucifixion of Christ, and confirms the received accounts with respect to the rise and rapid extension of the Gospel, as well as of the persecutions to which the earlier converts were exposed. The severity of his charges against the Christians, might be occasioned, in part, by the conflux and intermixture of wicked men, who joined in the profession of this faith without being real converts to its principles; seeking forgiveness, by ranging themselves under a covenant of mercy †, without duly considering the conditions. Brotier has observed, that the Jews at this time committed great enormities; and it is probable that the Christians, who were often confounded with them, suffered from their misconduct.

There are many other particulars casually

* Annals. l. xv. c. 44. vide Sulpic. Severus.

† Zozomen. l. v. c. 32.

mentioned by this writer, which explain or confirm circumstances related by the Evangelist. Thus, for instance, he describes Quirinius, who is supposed by all the learned to have been the Cyrenius mentioned by St. Luke*, as having been active in military affairs, and employed in difficult services†. The success which Tacitus represents him to have obtained in Cilicia; and his consequent appointment as governor to Caius Cæsar, the grandson of Augustus, in the East, did not take place till some years after the taxing spoken of by St. Luke; which taxing Lardner and others conceive to have been conducted by Cyrenius, as an assessor sent into Syria with extraordinary powers. The Evangelist, in recording this taxing, describes Cyrenius by the title which he afterwards obtained, of Governor of Syria‡. In another instance, he leads us to observe the minute propriety of expression, with which

* Luke ii. 2. He is called by Strabo, Κυρίνιος, l. xii. p. 569.

† Annal. lib. iii. sect. 43.

‡ The interpretation of the passage in St. Luke, adopted by Lardner, is most consistent with Heathen accounts, and with the statement of Josephus. This was the first assessment of Cyrenius the governor of Syria, Ηγεμονευόντος της Συρίας Κυρηνίου, being the same as Ηγεμονος της Συρίας, and being governed by the word *απογραφή*.

St. Luke styles Sergius Paulus deputy, i. e. pro-consul of Cyprus, since he applies the same distinctive title of pro-consul * to the Governor of Crete †, the government of which island, like that of Cyprus, had been made over by the Emperor to the Senate.

In addition to what Tacitus has stated in his history, with respect to Felix, it may be observed, that the historian represents him in his Annals to have rendered himself contemptible, and to have provoked insurrection among the people of his province by his misconduct, so as to have reduced it to a scene of rapine, treachery, and rebellion, and to have exposed it to the danger of a war, which but for the management of Quadratus, the Governor of Syria, would have been excited ‡.

We cannot read this account, and recollect that the affections of Drusilla, the wife of Felix, had been seduced by him from her former husband, Azizes, King of the Emisseni, without being struck with the illustration which it affords, of the noble conduct of St. Paul, when brought before

* Acts xiii. 7.

† Annal. lib. iii. sect. 38.

‡ Annals, lib. xii. sect. 54.

Felix, contrasted with the venal flattery of Tertullus *.

Tacitus, speaks of Pomponia Græcina, the wife of Plautus, a woman of eminent rank and qualities, in the reign of Nero, and represents her to have practised a foreign superstition †, by which it has been generally understood that she was converted to Christianity. The passage may be adduced among others, to shew that the religion of Christ was accepted by those who were in elevated stations; and it concurs with the salutation of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians ‡.

The style of Tacitus is not that of the purest ages, but has a peculiar force and descriptive power; it is sententious and impressive, and appears to have been most elaborately studied. He so poised and weighed his periods, for the sake of harmony, as sometimes to fall into verse. The Annals commence with an Hexameter verse, as does also the work of Livy and the History of the Jugurthine war by Sallust.

* See Essay on the Character of St. Paul by Mrs. Hannah More.

† Annals, l. xiii. c. 32.

‡ Chap. iv. 2.

CHAP. LV.

Caius Suetonius Tranquillus.

SUETONIUS seems to have been born in the reign of Vespasian, who ascended the Imperial throne A. D. 70; he filled the confidential office of Secretary to Adrian, but was dismissed, with others, for a failure in respect to the Empress Sabina.

Suetonius composed many works, enumerated by Suidas, and cited by different authors, which are now lost, excepting the lives of the twelve Cæsars; for the lives of Terence, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, and Lucan, sometimes attributed to him, are probably not genuine. It has been remarked with respect to the work which we possess, that the historian described the lives of the Emperors with as much freedom as they lived*.

* Spartian in Adrian. c. xi.

Suetonius enters into biographical details of the characters of the Emperors, and his history affords most deplorable proofs of their corruption. Many particulars may be collected from it, which tend to illustrate the subject of the present work, and which relate to the concerns of Jews and Christians.

The historian represents Augustus to have commended his grandson Caius, because, when passing by Judea, he had not offered up his prayers at Jerusalem*.

He relates that Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, on account of frequent tumults excited by Chrestus†. Doubts have been entertained whether by Chrestus the historian meant Jesus Christ. It is probable that under the word Jews, the Christians were included; and whether by Christ we understand our Saviour to have been intended, as the original founder of the Christian institutions, or only some popular leader of temporary tumults, the account of Suetonius may be thought to confirm the relation in the Acts of the Apostles, with respect to Aquila and Priscilla, who are incidentally stated by the Evangelist to have

* August. c. 93.

† Claudius, cap. 25. page 25. Edit. Oudendorp.

left Rome, because Claudius had commanded all Jews to quit that city*. It is well known that the disputes between the Jews and Christians, which prevailed in the first ages, led to tumultuary meetings and disturbances, which might have given ground for the interference of the Roman government†.

This account of Suetonius is the more important, as it is cursorily mentioned, and records a command, which, (not having been decreed by the Senate,) is not noticed by Tacitus, Josephus, or Dion Cassius.

Claudius is known to have entertained an aversion to the Jews, though, from regard to Agrippa, he passed some few edicts in their favour, upon his first accession to the throne‡. It is possible, however, that he was in some degree influenced to banish them by an apprehension of famine at Rome; and that the expulsion took place A.D. 51, in the 12th year of his reign, three years later than it is placed by Orosius.

Suetonius confirms the account of Tacitus, that “an ancient and constant opinion had

* Acts xviii. 2.

† Acts xviii. 12, 13.

‡ Joseph. Antiq. l. xv. c. 4.

“ prevailed, through all the East, of its
 “ being decreed by the fates that those who
 “ at that time should go forth from Judæa,
 “ should possess the empire. That the event
 “ proved that this prediction respected the
 “ Roman emperor, though the Jews apply-
 “ ing this to themselves, were excited to re-
 “ bellion, having slain their governor, and
 “ put to flight also the proconsul of Syria,
 “ (then bringing reinforcements) and cap-
 “ tured a Roman eagle *.” The prophecy
 of Micah, which authorized the expectation
 of a ruler, spoke of him by a distinction
 which should have excluded its application
 to any earthly sovereign, since it declared
 that his “ goings forth have been from old,
 “ from everlasting †.”

Suetonius further informs us that “ Ves-
 “ pasian upon consulting in Judæa the oracle
 “ of the God of Carmel, was assured by its
 “ promises, that what he then thought of,
 “ and revolved in his mind, however great
 “ it might be, should come to pass ‡.” Ta-
 citus, from whom probably Suetonius drew
 his account, further relates, that Vespasian

* Titus Flavius Vespasian, c. 4.

† Micah. v. 2.

‡ Vesp. cap. v.

sacrificed on the mountain, where there was no image of the divinity, or temple, but only an altar, to which a traditional reverence had been paid *. It is impossible not to recognize in these statements, which mutually corroborate each other, a striking record and confirmation of the stupendous miracle which was wrought by the true God upon Mount Carmel, through the intervention of his prophet Elijah †. Nor may it be unreasonable to suppose, that the altar spoken of, to which alone, reverence had been paid from time immemorial, was erected in honour of that altar, upon which the “ fire of the
 “ Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacri-
 “ fice, and the wood, and the stones, and
 “ the dust, and licked up the water that was
 “ in the trench ‡.”

Suetonius adds that Josephus, whom he styles one of the noble captives, constantly affirmed when he was thrown into chains, that he should be released by Vespasian, but that it should be after, he became Emperor. The golden vessels and instruments brought from Jerusalem were deposited in

* Hist. lib. ii. sect. 78.

† 1 Kings xviii. 19. et sequem.

‡ 1 Kings xviii. 38.

the Temple of Peace, at Rome, the law and the purple veils in the palace. The temple was burnt in the reign of Commodus, but the Jewish spoils seem to have been preserved to the fifth century *.

Suetonius gives a similar account with Tacitus, respecting the blind and lame persons, who were reported to have been restored by the Emperor. It is to be observed, however, that Suetonius describes one of the persons as weak in the leg, whereas Tacitus † and Dio state that he was weak in the hand. There can be little doubt that the whole was a concerted scene, displayed in a circle predisposed to credulity. Suetonius informs us, that something was wanted to give dignity to the Flavian family, which was not remarkable for its splendour or antiquity. Some have suspected the agency of evil spirits; and Whiston seems, strangely enough, to have been of opinion, that they were real miracles, which Providence allowed the Emperor to perform, as a chosen instrument in his hands, imagining that God had previously overruled the Oracle of Serapis to

* Reland de Spolus Templi Hierosol. p. 133.

† Hist. lib. iv. §. 81.

proclaim the divine approbation of the advancement of Vespasian to the throne*.

Suetonius, in his account of Domitian, whose reign commenced A. D. 81, states him to have endeavoured to replenish his exhausted treasury, by a severe exaction of the Jewish tax, which was enforced on those who lived after the customs of that people, without publicly entering themselves as professing their religion; or who, dissembling their origin, withheld the tribute imposed on the nation. The historian adds, that he himself was present as a youth, when a man of ninety years of age was publicly examined. The Christians were probably included in this requisition†. It is worthy of observation, that the Capitol, for the preservation of the structure of which this tax was applied, after the subjection of Judea, was burnt, A. U. C. 822‡, nearly about the same time with the temple of Jerusalem, to the support of which the tax was originally appropriated. With respect to the Christians in particular, Suetonius represents them as a

* See notes to Josephus. See also not. Ernesti in loc. lib. iii. p. 466.

† Orosius Hist. l. vii. c. 6.

‡ Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. §. 72.

race of men addicted to a new and mischievous superstition *, employing the term “new” contemptuously, and in contradistinction to the religious rites of the Jews, which, according to Tacitus, were defended by their antiquity †. By the word “malefica,” some have understood “magical,” conceiving the historian to use it in allusion to the works which the Christians professed to perform, particularly that of expelling evil spirits from persons demoniacally possessed.

Lardner ‡ conceives that Flavius Clement, whom Suetonius represents to have been put to death by Domitian, was a Christian. He is described by Suetonius as a man of the most contemptible inactivity, a charge to which the Christians were subjected by the Heathens, who mistaking that subjection of the passions which they maintained, for indifference, stigmatized them as men of indolent temper §. Dion Cassius states, that he, and Domitilla, who was banished to Pontia, as a proselyte to Christianity ||, were accused

* Nero. Claud. c. 16. p. 662. Edit. Oudendorp. Lardner's Heath. Test. c. viii. b. 7. p. 267.

† Tacitus Hist. l. v. See Jortin and Juvenal, Sat. iii. l. 43.

‡ Heathen Testim. vol. vii. c. 8 vol. viii. c. 27.

§ Tertul. Apol. c. 42.

|| Hieron. Epist. 86. tom. iv. p. 572.

of impiety *. Clement and Domitilla were both relations of the Emperor Domitian, Clement being his cousin german; and Domitian had publicly named the sons of Clement as his successors, committing them to the care of Quintilian †: it appears therefore that persons immediately connected with the Imperial family, were at this period converted to Christianity. Suetonius states, that Domitian's death was accelerated principally by this act of injustice ‡.

* Επηνέχθη δὲ ἀμφοῖν ἐγκλημα ἀθεοτήτος υφ' ἧς καὶ ἄλλοι εἰς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἥθη ἐξεκέλλοντες πολλοὶ κατεδικασθησαν. L. lxvii. p. 766. 1112.

† Quintil. Inst. l. iv.

‡ Domit. c. 15. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. c. 3. Philost. de V. A. T. l. viii. c. 25.

CHAP. LVI.

Caius Plinius Cæcilius Secundus.

PLINY, who was nephew of Caius Plinius Secundus, the historian, was born A. U. C. 815, in the ninth year of Nero, and in the 62d of the Christian æra, at Novocomo, on the borders of the Lake of Como, called Larius by Virgil. He gave early proofs of his talents, and so distinguished himself by his noble exertions as an orator and statesman *, that he was marked for destruction in the tablets of Domitian, but happily lived to celebrate the virtues of Trajan in a panegyric, which is still extant, and to display in his own character those amiable and munificent qualities, and those benevolent affections in social and domestic

* Pliny, when appointed to preside over the treasury of Saturn, renounced his pleadings “quibus alioqui nunquam eram promiscuè functus.” Lib. i. Epist. 20.

retirement, which place the Heathen character in the most favourable point of view.

Pliny, in his youth, served as a military tribune in Syria *, and he was pro-consul in Bythinia, when he wrote his most interesting epistle to Trajan, composed not more than forty years after the death of St. Paul, which presents an unsuspected memorial of the virtues of the primitive Christians.

In this celebrated document †, the philosopher professes himself “ never to have been
 “ present at any trials concerning the Chris-
 “ tians, and from his inexperience to have en-
 “ tertained doubts how he should proceed
 “ with respect to them ; and therefore to refer
 “ himself to the Emperor, as he considered
 “ it to be a solemn duty ; that he hesitated
 “ not a little, whether he should make any
 “ distinction as to age, or no difference be-
 “ tween the young or those matured in years ;
 “ whether he should grant pardon to repent-
 “ ance, or whether the person who had once
 “ professed himself a Christian, might not
 “ derive advantage from a recantation ; whe-
 “ ther the name itself, although it were not
 “ found united with crimes, or the crimes of

* Ep. 10. l. 1. Epis. 2. l. 3.

† Lib. x. Epist. 97.

“ those who bore the name, should be punished.”

After expressing these doubts, which indicate but little acquaintance with any just principles of government, he proceeds to observe, that he had adopted this mode with regard to those who were charged before him with being Christians. “ I interrogated them,” says he, “ whether they were Christians, and if they confessed, I renewed my enquiries a second and a third time, accompanied with threats. I commanded those who persisted, to be led out to punishment, for I entertained no doubt that, whatever the nature of their confession might be, their stubbornness and inflexible obstinacy merited punishment.” He farther states, that there were others infected with a like insanity, whom, because they were citizens of Rome, he directed to be sent thither ; that even as they were dragged away, the offence appeared, as usually happens, to spread itself, and that it was to be met with under various forms.” He also adds, “ that an information had been preferred, without the subscription of any name, which contained a charge against many, who denied that they were, or had been Christians, and who re-

“ peated after him an invocation to the Gods,
 “ and a supplication to the statue of the Em-
 “ peror, (which with this view he had ordered
 “ to be brought out, with the images of the
 “ Gods,) offering frankincense and wine be-
 “ fore it, and moreover reviling Christ, none
 “ of which things, it was said, those who were
 “ really Christians could be compelled to do;
 “ and that therefore he thought that they
 “ should be dismissed.”

Pliny proceeds to relate, “ that others,
 “ who were personally named by the in-
 “ former, confessed that they were Chris-
 “ tians, but immediately afterwards retract-
 “ ed, affirming that they had been indeed,
 “ but had ceased so to be, some above three
 “ years, others more, and a few even above
 “ twenty years since : that these all worship-
 “ ped the statue of the Emperor and the
 “ images of the Gods, and likewise uttered
 “ invectives against Christ, but that they de-
 “ clared that this was the extent of their fault
 “ or their error ; that they were accustomed,
 “ on a stated day, to assemble together before
 “ the dawn, to sing a choral hymn * to Christ

* “ *Carmenque Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invi-
 cem.*” Perhaps to address a prayer to Christ as to a God,
 with responses. See Acts ii. 42. xx. 7. xxi. 22.

“ as to a God, and to bind themselves by a
 “ solemn oath—not for the perpetration of
 “ any wickedness*, but not to commit any
 “ thefts, or robberies, or adulteries; not to
 “ break their engagements, not to refuse
 “ when called upon to restore a deposit.
 “ This being performed, they departed, and
 “ again assembled in order to eat together
 “ in common and in an harmless manner †,
 “ which they had even ceased to do after
 “ this edict of Pliny, in which, agreeably
 “ to the commands of the Emperor, he had
 “ forbidden that any association ‡ should
 “ exist; that in consequence he had judged
 “ it the more necessary to enquire the
 “ truth, even by torture, from two female
 “ slaves, who were said to be assistants §;
 “ but that he had found nothing else but
 “ the proofs of a depraved and immoderate
 “ superstition, and that therefore deferring
 “ the cognizance of the affair, he deter-

* The Christians seem, in their apology, to have designed to refute the suspicions to which they were subjected, by their early and private meetings, of having any thing in common with the Bacchanalians.

† See Acts iv. 32. ‡ *Ἐκκλησίαι*. Social communities.

§ Probably, as has been conjectured, they were Deaconesses, who, in the primitive Church, were employed in charitable and religious offices. See Vossius.

“ mined to consult the Emperor ;” for “ the
 “ concern, (says he), appears to me to be de-
 “ serving of deliberation, principally on ac-
 “ count of the numbers involved ; since many
 “ of every age, of every rank, and of both
 “ sexes, are, and will continue to be, exposed
 “ to danger, from the contagion of this su-
 “ perstition, spread not only through the
 “ cities, but even through the villages and
 “ country, which nevertheless, as it appears,
 “ may be stopped and corrected. Certainly,
 “ (he adds), it is sufficiently evident, that the
 “ temples, which have been almost deserted,
 “ begin again to be resorted to, and the so-
 “ lemnities, which have been long intermitted,
 “ to be renewed, and victims are every where
 “ sold, for which lately purchasers have sel-
 “ dom been found. From which circum-
 “ stances, (continues Pliny), it may easily be
 “ conjectured, what number of men might be
 “ reclaimed, if room for repentance were
 “ allowed *.” It appears from this memor-
 able Epistle, how very different, on the sub-
 ject of toleration, were the principles of philo-
 sophy when professed under its mildest form,
 and by a man distinguished for his humanity,

* Lib. x. Epist. 97.

from those which the liberal spirit of Christianity introduced.

Trajan, in his answer to the Epistle, commends the conduct of Pliny, and directs that in future the Christians should not be officiously sought for; but that if they were brought forward and convicted, they should be punished: with this restriction, however, that he who should deny himself to be a Christian, and should make it clear that he was not such, by supplicating the Roman deities, though he might before have been suspected, should receive pardon upon his repentance; but that informations brought forward without the author's name, should not be received, as being of the worst example, and not consistent with the practice of his government. We see that even Trajan, in the exercise of his power, still adheres to very intolerant principles; observing the original maxims which had prevailed in the early times of the republic, and which enjoined the magistrate to prohibit the introduction of foreign rites of religion, and to expel their sacrificers and their priests from the Forum, the Circus, and the City; directing that he should seek for, and burn their prophetic books, and

should abolish all modes of sacrifice, excepting those which were agreeable to the Roman customs*.

The other letters in the collection often exhibit Pliny in a pleasing point of view, as devoted to literature, and fond of the retirement of private life, of which he describes the domestic scenes, even to the minutest detail of his villas, with affectionate warmth†. In his panegyric, he describes a sanctity of manners worthy of ancient Rome. He sometimes betrays ■ pedantic vanity, and sometimes a most unphilosophical credulity, with respect to the appearances of departed spirits, restless and haunting their earthly abodes‡, inclining to a superstition, which

* Livy, lib. xxxix. § 16.

† The excellent Rollin makes the following just reflections upon these Epistles: “ Combien de pareils endroits four-
“ nissent-ils de reflexions propres à faire comprendre aux
“ jeunes gens la sainteté et la pureté de la religion chrè-
“ tienne, l’aveuglement volontaire et criminel, des plus
“ beaux esprits du paganisme, l’injustice criante des princes
“ les plus modérés et les plus sages qu’aient jamais eû les
“ Romains, et la contradiction manifeste de leurs edits contre
“ les chrétiens, on l’on voit que pour les condamner ils a
“ fallu rénoncer, non seulement à tout équité, mais encore
“ aux bons sens et à la droite raison.” See Belles Lettres,
tom. i. p. 69.

‡ Lib. vii. Epist. 27.

Lucian has ridiculed with much pleasantry *. He entertained a just abhorrence of suicide, which he styles “luctuosissimum genus mortis †,” and which so much prevailed under the influence of the Stoical opinions of his time, that the example of Pætus and Arria were often imitated ‡ ; and lastly, he illustrated the most considerate principles of regard and kindness for his dependants and slaves §.

* Φιλοψευδης.

† Lib. i. Epist. 12 and 22. Lib. iii. Epist. 16.

‡ Lib. iii. Epist. 16.

§ Lib. viii. Epist. 16.

CHAP. LVII.

Decimus vel Decius Junius Juvenalis.

JUVENAL was born in the reign of Claudius, at Aquinum, in Campania ; and lived during the successive reigns of Domitian, Nerva, Trajan, and Adrian. He is supposed to have studied under Fronto and Quintilian, and to have practised at the Roman bar. He seems to have lived principally at Rome, though some state, that in consequence of the resentment of Paris, the comedian, who was a favourite of Domitian, he was sent by the Emperor, under pretence of military employment, to Pentapolis, on the frontiers of Egypt and Lybia *. If this be a correct account, we may suppose with Dodwell, that he returned to Rome in the time of Adrian †. Martial represents him to have been a fre-

* The place afterwards celebrated for the birth of Thomas Aquinas.

† Malala. lib. i. Chron. p. 34. Sueton.

quenter of the houses of the great *. He probably cultivated the friendship of Seneca, to whose moral and religious code he seems to have subscribed, professing the Stoic principles, and speaking with general reverence for the Dèity, but with contempt for the popular superstition.

The sixteen satires of Juvenal are written with considerable spirit, and abound with fine moral reflections, and passages of declamatory eloquence, worked up with peculiar force. His indignant satire displayed the corruption of heathen manners, so as fully to demonstrate that the Romans were given over to a reprobate mind; and he appears to have been one of those witnesses who at different times proclaimed the precepts of a moral law, and seconded the suggestions of conscience. The broad and offensive descriptions which he gives of the abominations which prevailed, might have had some effect in exciting a sense of shame in those who were not utterly lost in depravity; but these licentious pictures are revolting to the mind of a Christian; and Cæsar Scaliger considered the satires as unfit to be read, declaring,

* Lib. xii. Epig. 18. al. 17.

“ Se vel jubere, vel optare, toto opere absti-
 nere virum probum *.”

Traditionary accounts, consistent with truth, break in upon us in every heathen work. Juvenal alludes to the circumstance of the first man being formed of clay, without the intervention of parents, at a time when perjury and robbery were unknown, and when the goddess Astrea, with her two sisters, Chastity and Faith, dwelt in person amongst men †. He describes the deterioration of successive ages, and the excesses of human corruption, but does not shew any acquaintance with its origin. He alludes to a perverted account of the deluge ‡. He mentions the laws of Moses, but as delivered in a secret volume ; alluding perhaps to its having been kept first in the ark §, and secondly in the tabernacle ; and if any imitations of the sacred writings are to be found in his satires ||, they are so slight as not to afford any argument for comparison. He makes, however, some statements, with re-

* Poetices 98.

† Sat. vi. l. 1—20.

‡ Sat. i. l. 81, 82.

§ Deut. x. 5. xxxi. 24. 26.

|| Sat. x. l. 210. 215. compare with 2 Sam. xix. 34, 35.

spect both to the Jews and Christians, which deserve consideration.

It appears from Juvenal, that persons of eminent rank in Judea, and the customs which prevailed in that country, were subjects of popular attention at Rome in his time, and that confused and inaccurate accounts were received concerning them. He represents the Jews, whom he calls “the children of men that reverence the sabbath,” as “adoring nothing but clouds, and the skies,” (the Deity of Heaven)*; as “abhorring, like their forefathers, swines flesh as much as that of the human body†; and as being circumcised.” He states that being accustomed to despise the Roman laws, they learnt thoroughly “whatever precepts Moses delivered, (such as), not to point out the road except to those who respected the same rites, and to lead those only who were circumcised to the fountains for which they enquired ‡.” “Their forefathers,” says the satirist, “were to be blamed for this, who devoted every se-

* Sat. xiv. l. 96, 97. See Numb. x. 34. Aristophanes brought the same charge against Socrates.

† Sat. xiv. l. 98. See also Sat. vi. l. 159. Compare with Levit. ix. 7. Dion. Cass. lib. xxxvii. 17.

‡ Sat. xiv. l. 100.

“venth day to idleness, excluding it from the
 “concerns of life*.” It is scarcely necessary
 to observe, that Juvenal, in the contemptuous
 asperity of his satire, misrepresents the
 instruction of the Jewish legislator, when he
 describes it as forbidding courtesy to stran-
 gers; though it is possible the Jews of his
 time might shew a resentment against the
 Romans for the treatment they experienced
 from them, and might interpret too rigor-
 ously the laws † which were designed to se-
 cure them from any idolatrous connection
 with the nations with whom they had inter-
 course, forgetting that charitable ‡ regard
 to strangers which the precepts of Moses
 expressly enjoined.

In describing the capricious and expensive
 taste of the Roman women, Juvenal men-
 tions, as an object of request, “a precious
 “gem given by Agrippa to his incestuous
 “sister Berenice §, in the country where
 “kings observed their solemn sabbaths bare-

* Sat. xiv. l. 104.

† Deut. vii.

‡ Exod. xxii. 21. xxiii. 9. Lev. xix. 18. 34. Deut. x.
 18, 19. xxxiv. 17. 22. Giffard's transl. note to 14 Sat.
 l. 145.

§ Acts xxv. 13.

“footed* , and where ancient forbearance
 “spared the long-lived swine †.” In the
 former passage he alludes to the custom estab-
 lished amongst the Jews, of officiating at
 the sacrifices with bare feet ‡ ; a custom
 grounded probably on the divine direction
 given to Moses to put off his shoes from his
 feet, when he trod on the ground hallowed
 by the divine presence §.

Juvenal, after marking with striking and
 characteristic effect, the various superstitions
 which prevailed at Rome, represents the
 “Jewess trembling with age, whispering her
 “secrets for lucre in the ear ; professing her-
 “self able to interpret the laws of Jerusalem,
 “high priestess of the (sacred) tree, and the
 “faithful messenger of heaven || ; describing
 her in a character similar to that in which the
 gipsies now appear, as receiving a small piece
 of money for a reward, and as selling what-
 ever dreams might be required.

In another place he represents certain
 Jews, whose whole possessions were a basket

* L. 14 and 96. Exod. iii. 5. Josh. v. 14.

† Sat. vi. l. 157—60.

‡ Josephus.

§ Exod. iii. 5.

|| Sat. vi. l. 542.

and a little hay, as living in a state of mendicity, near the fountain of Egeria, hiring its grove and temples*.

There is a passage in the sixth satire of Juvenal, in which he remarks, that a greater confidence would be placed in the Chaldeans, because the oracles of Delphi had ceased†: alluding, no doubt, to the silence of the oracles, produced by the influence of Christianity. He demonstrates in almost every page, the necessity which existed for that Divine Revelation; and even the addresses which he represents to have been daily offered up to the gods‡, serve to shew how much the best institutions of religion were perverted, in the practices of his age. He informs us also that there was a general incredulity in his time, concerning a state of future rewards and punishments, produced probably, as he seems to intimate, by the fabulous representations with respect to the infernal regions, which were given in popular superstition; and he considers that this

* Sat. iii. l. 12—16.

† Line 554. In the time of the Consul Lucius Emilius Paulus, 167 years before Christ, the oracle of Delphi was in the highest repute. Livy, lib. xlv. § 27.

‡ Juvenal, Sat. x. line 23. et. seq.

was one cause of the crimes committed by men released from all fear of future judgment*.

Juvenal mentions in various places the persecutions to which the Christians were exposed. He speaks of the pitched vestments, in which they were burnt, fixed to the stake, producing a long furrow, as their bodies were dragged along the dust of the Arena†.

* Sat. ii. l. 149—152.

† Sat. i. l. 155. 157. See also Sat. viii. l. 235, and Seneca. Consol. ad Mar. c. 20.

CHAP. LVIII.

Junianus Justinus.

THE period in which Justin lived is not ascertained. He is generally allowed to have flourished before the Emperors were converted to Christianity; and the clearness and politeness of his style, indicate an earlier period than the reign of Theodosius, in which he is placed by some writers, while others, who appear to have confounded him with Justin Martyr, represent him to have dedicated his work to Antoninus.

The work of Justin is an abridgment, in forty-four books of Trogus Pompeius, who lived in the reign of Augustus, and wrote the history of ancient nations, and particularly of the Macedonians, from the time of Ninus to that of Augustus. That part of the work which relates to the Jews, may be extracted, as affording proofs of the erroneous representations which continued to prevail with re-

spect to that people, notwithstanding the opportunities which existed for obtaining accurate information concerning them.

The historian states, that the Jews “ drew
 “ their origin from Damascus *, a most noble
 “ city of Syria, where, in honour of a so-
 “ vereign of that name, a sepulchral monu-
 “ ment, erected to his wife, was revered as
 “ a temple, and herself worshipped as a god-
 “ dess † ; that after Damascus, Azelus,
 “ Adores, Abraham, and Israhel, reigned in
 “ succession : that Israhel was distinguished
 “ from his progenitors by a family of ten
 “ sons, to whom he committed his subjects,
 “ distributed under ten kingdoms, and called
 “ all the people Jews, from the name of
 “ Judah, who died after the division, and
 “ whose memory his father directed to be
 “ generally respected : that his portion was
 “ distributed among the rest : that Joseph
 “ was the youngest among his brethren, who,
 “ from envy of his excellent disposition,
 “ sold him privately to foreign merchants,
 “ by whom he was carried into Egypt : that
 “ when Joseph, by his quick intelligence, had
 “ obtained a knowledge of magical arts, he

* L. xxxvi. c. 2. See also Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. ix. c. 16.

† It is possible that this is some corrupted account of the sepulchre of Sarah. See Gen. xxiii. 9—19.

“ recommended himself greatly to the king :
 “ that he was most sagacious in explaining
 “ prodigies, and first established the inter-
 “ pretation of dreams ; that nothing of di-
 “ vine or human law was unknown to him,
 “ so that he even foresaw, many years before
 “ it took place, the sterility of the land : that
 “ all Egypt would have perished through
 “ famine, if the king had not, by his ad-
 “ monition, issued an edict, commanding
 “ that the fruits of the earth for many years
 “ should be preserved : and that so great
 “ things were experienced from him, that his
 “ answers seemed to be given not by a man
 “ but by a God *.”

Justin proceeds to relate, that “ Joseph
 “ had a son named Moses, whom the
 “ beauty of his form, as well as the inhe-
 “ ritage of his father’s knowledge, recom-
 “ mended to regard ; but that the Egyp-
 “ tians, having suffered from eruptions and
 “ leprosy †, upon a divine admonition, ex-
 “ pelled him, with the others who were in-
 “ fected, lest the contagion should spread :
 “ that Moses being in consequence appointed
 “ leader of the exiles, carried off by theft

* Lib. xxxvi c. 2.

† Exod. ix. 10, 11. See Diodor. Sicul. Frag. lib. xxxiv. xl.

“ the sacred ornaments of the Egyptians,
 “ which they endeavoured to recover by arms
 “ without success, being compelled through
 “ tempests to retreat. He states, that Moses
 “ returning to Damascus, the birth-place of
 “ his ancestors, took possession of a mountain
 “ in Syria, where, upon his arrival with his
 “ people, wearied by a fast of seven days in
 “ the deserts of Arabia, he consecrated the
 “ seventh day, called the Sabbath, by the
 “ custom of the Jewish nation, to be observed
 “ with fasting through all ages, because that
 “ day had terminated their hunger and wan-
 “ dering.”

The historian adds, “ that because they
 “ had remembered that they were driven out
 “ from Egypt from the fear of infection, they
 “ took care not to have any communication
 “ with strangers, least for the same reason
 “ they should be hated by the inhabitants,
 “ which conduct originating in this motive,
 “ by degrees produced a form of discipline
 “ and religion.”

Justin proceeds to observe, “ that after Mo-
 “ ses, his son Aruas*, a priest of the Egyptian
 “ rites, was created king; and that from that
 “ time, it became a custom among the Jews,

* Aaron.

“ that the same persons should be kings and
 “ priests, whose administration of justice
 “ mingling with religion raised up an incre-
 “ dible power.”

In the remainder of the account, Justin states, that “ the wealth of the nation increased, by revenues from balsam, which is
 “ produced only in their country, for that
 “ there is a valley which is enclosed with
 “ continued mountains, as by a wall, and in
 “ a manner resembling a camp; that the
 “ space consists of two hundred acres, and is
 “ called Jericho, wherein there is a wood
 “ remarkable for its fruitfulness and pleasant
 “ appearance, being distinguished for its
 “ palm-trees and balsams.”

He describes the balsam-tree as having a form similar to the fir-tree, excepting that it is not so lofty. He remarks that it is cultivated like a vine; and that this tree, in a certain time of the year, exudes the balsam. He observes that the place is not more remarkable for its warmth, than for its exuberance, since as the sun is more ardent here, than in any part of the world, there is a kind of natural and perpetual glow in the sultry air. He relates, that the lake of Asphaltites, on account of its magnitude, and the tranquillity of its waters,

was called the Dead Sea, for that it is not moved by the winds, (which are resisted by the bitumen by which it is rendered stagnant) nor does it endure navigation, because all things which are without life sink into the deep, so that it does not sustain any matter unless what is smeared with alum.

Justin concludes his account with observing, that the Jews were first subdued by Xerxes, king of the Persians; that they afterwards surrendered themselves to Alexander, and that they were long subject to the Macedonian empire in the kingdom of Syria; that when they revolted from Demetrius, and sought the friendship of the Romans, they first among the Orientalists, obtained freedom, the Romans then easily conceding what did not belong to them*.

The whole sketch of history which Justin has transmitted with regard to the Jews, preserves, amidst palpable misrepresentations, the most clear and unequivocal proofs of an original foundation in truth.

* Lib. xxxvi. c. 2, 3. p. 528. Edit. Wetsten.

CHAP. LIX.

Ammianus Marcellinus.

MARCELLINUS was of a noble family, and lived under successive Emperors, from the reign of Constantius to that of Theodosius the elder. He wrote a Roman history, in thirty-one books, of a period extending from the reign of Nerva to the death of Valens. Of this history, the first thirteen books, which brought down the work to the time of Constantius, are lost. He was a contemporary of, and often an agent in the concerns described in the history which remains. He was sent with Ursicinus by Constantine into the east, and afterwards into Gaul, and other parts of the empire; and being distinguished for his military talents, he enjoyed the favour of Julian, and accompanied him in his expedition against the Persians, in which the Emperor lost his life *.

* Lib. xxiv. c. 1. Lib. xxv. c. 2. Lib. xiv. c. 9.

Ammianus was a native of Antioch *, a city, as he observes, “known throughout the “ world,” and in which the disciples of Christ, probably from the number of converts there, were first called Christians †. Chiffletius ‡, and Petrus Pythæus, have conceived, from some passages in the history of Marcellinus, that he was a proselyte to the Gospel. He certainly speaks with great respect of that religion, since in summing up the character of Constantius, he observes, that “ the Emperor mixed a doting superstition with the “ perfect and simple religion of the Christians ||.” Amidst subjects also of commendation on Jovian, he describes him as observant of the Christian law. He remarks likewise of George, Bishop of Alexandria, that he forgot his profession, which persuaded nothing but what was just and mild §. It is probable, however, as Valesius contends, that Ammianus adhered to the religion of his ancestors ; he speaks of the Heathen deities

* Valesius Præfat.

† Acts ii. 26.

‡ Chiffletius de Vit. Ammian.

|| Lib. i. c. 16. p. 236. Edit. Gronov. 1693. Vide Gregor. Nazianz. p. 380. Ambrose Epist. ad Philip. p. 520.

§ Lib. xxii. 11. See also lib. xviii. c. 10. ; lib. xxix. c. 5.

as of objects of his reverence * and attachment ; his candour, however, led him to acknowledge the beneficial tendency of the Christian religion, and to admire the fortitude and glorious death of its martyrs †. He could not behold the intolerant measure of Julian, without intimating ‡ disapprobation of his want of clemency ; neither could he contemplate the character of those harmless men, who were subjected to persecution, without feeling that they were entitled to esteem ; and he expressly indeed remarks on some provincial chief priests, that is, Christian Bishops, whom he mentions, that “ by spare diet, coarse dress, and down-cast eyes, they were approved by the eternal Being, and by his true worshippers as prudent and modest men.”

Ammianus Marcellinus is a writer of distinguished veracity, his history is to be noticed particularly, as it exhibits a contemporary and unimpeachable record of the remarkable circumstances which defeated the attempt of Julian to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, A. D. 363.

* Lib. xiv. c. 11. p. 46.

† Lib. xxii. c. 12. p. 252.

‡ Lib. xxii—xxv.

The learned Warburton thus translates the passage relating to this attempt:—"The Emperor being desirous to eternise his reign by the greatness of his atchievements, projected to rebuild, at an immense expence, the proud and magnificent temple of Jerusalem, which (after many combats, attended with much bloodshed on both sides, during the siege, by Vespasian) was, with great difficulty, taken and destroyed by Titus. He committed the conduct of this affair to Alypius, of Antioch, who formerly had been lieutenant in Britain*. When therefore this Alypius had set himself to the vigorous execution of his charge, in which he had all the assistance that the governor of the province could afford him, horrible balls of fire breaking out near the foundations with frequent reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen, and the victorious element being obstinately and resolutely bent as it were, to drive the men to a distance, Alypius thought it best to give over the enterprise†."

This account is confirmed by the writings

* Julian Epist. 29, 30.

† Warburton's Julian, p. 57.

of the Christian Fathers; by Ambrose*, Chrysostom†, and Gregory Nazianzen‡, the last of whom published his statement before the year expired; and by the historians Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret.

The author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, describes the history in which this relation is given as judicious and candid, and reluctantly admits the testimony to be unexceptionable; but he afterwards adds, with much inconsistency, that “a philosopher might still require the original evidence of impartial and intelligent spectators§,” and insinuates, that at the important crisis, any singular accident of nature would assume the appearance, and produce the effect, of a real prodigy, and that this glorious deliverance would be speedily improved and magnified by the pious arts of the clergy, and the active credulity of the Christian world; so that at the distance of twenty years, a Roman historian, careless of theological disputes, might adorn his work with a specious and splendid miracle.

* Ambrose Epist. 40. tom. ii. p. 946. Edit. Bened. et Theodos.

† Adver. Judæos, p. 574. Edit. Montfaucon.

‡ Orat. 4. p. 110—113.

§ Decline and Fall, c. 23.

It is not easy to find, even in the history of Mr. Gibbon, a more striking instance of perverseness; and he who could imagine that the zealous and determined preparations of Julian, and the anxious wishes of the Jews, were to be defeated by a mere accident, and that no explanation to account for the relinquishment of the design, should have been offered, in opposition to the exultations of the Christians, need not affect to triumph over the credulity of those who believe in the miracle. The historian, though he refers to the work of Warburton, seems not to have attended to the remark of the learned prelate, that there must be many millions to one, against the probability of any natural eruption.

CHAP. LX.

Ambrosius Aurelius Theodosius Macrobius.

MACROBIUS flourished in the time of Honorius and Theodosius the younger*. He was a man of consular dignity, enjoying high situations in the Imperial Court, and is not to be confounded with Macrobius, the Presbyter, mentioned by Cave†.

Macrobius has left two books of commentaries on the "Somnium Scipionis," described by Cicero; and seven books "Saturnaliorum," being convivial dissertations on various subjects, much of which is taken from Aulus Gellius, and the 7th book is drawn principally from Plutarch. Erasmus represents him as clothing himself in borrowed plumes.

Some have imagined, without sufficient reason, that Macrobius had professed Chris-

* Codex Theodos. lib. vi. tit. 8.

† Hist. Literar. A. D. 44.

tianity*. There is not any thing in his works to confirm such a supposition. He adopted, as Cudworth and others have fully explained, a Platonic system of theology, in conjunction with some opinions derived from other sects. He considers all things as made by nature†, and appears to have revered the sun, (with other deities‡,) ascribing to it high titles of power and pre-eminence. He acknowledges, however, as probably the ancient Persians did§, above all mundane Gods, a first and original cause, of whom no image was made, who from the superabundant fecundity of his majesty, created mind, which as it looked upwards towards the Father, bore the resemblance of its author, but as it looked downward, produced soul; and this soul again as to its superior part, resembled that mind from which it was begotten, but working downward, produced this corporeal fabric||. Under such figurative and mysterious language did the metaphysical philo-

* Barthius *Adversaria*, p. 2258. et Grot. ad *Matt.* ii. 16.
See *Spanheim Dub. Evan.* tom. i. p. 533.

† *Saturn.* lib. vii. c. 16.

‡ *Som. Scipion.* lib. i. c. 14. *Huet. Prop.* iv. c. 10. p. 118.

§ *Herod.* lib. i. 131.

|| *Intellectual System*, b. i. ch. 4. p. 457.

sophers amuse their followers with some shadow of Truth.

There is an account stated by this writer, which represents Augustus, upon being informed that Herod's son had been killed among the infants under two years of age, whom that king had ordered to be slain in Syria, jocosely to have observed, that "it was better to be Herod's hog than his son*." It has been remarked, with a view to invalidate the testimony deducible from a relation thus casually introduced by Macrobius, that as we have no account that a son of Herod was killed upon the occasion referred to, Macrobius must have been mistaken in ascribing this reflection to Augustus. There is no sufficient reason, however, to doubt that Augustus might have made the remark mentioned, upon the character of Herod, though it is probable that he alluded not to any cruelty shewn upon occasion of the massacre of the innocents, but to that which appeared in the instance of the punishment of Antipater, who was put to death, by his father, Herod, nearly at the same time that he executed the sanguinary dictates of his jealousy at Bethlehem ;

* Ὅτι ἢ ὕιον. Saturn. l. ii. c. 4. and Chandler's Vind. vol. ii. ch. 2. § 2. p. 463. Baron. ad An. i. cap. 50.

and there seems reason likewise to believe, that Macrobius, writing long after the events described, blended the two accounts, erroneously supposing that Herod's son was killed in the massacre *. The relation, however, sufficiently shews, that the massacre of the children was a transaction well known in the time of Macrobius.

It has been considered as remarkable, that the slaughter of the innocents is not noticed by Josephus ; but it should be remembered, that Herod died eighty years before Josephus wrote his history of the Jewish War, and one hundred years before he published the *Antiquities* ; and that Nicholas of Damascus, from whom Josephus sometimes derived his accounts, and from whom he might be expected to draw the knowledge of events of which he was not a witness, was particularly attached to Herod, and wrote his history under the eyes of the king, with a view to whose favour he might have suppressed a transaction so dishonourable to him. The event recorded by Macrobius, seems to be alluded to in a Rabbinical work, called "*Toldoth Jeshu*," where it is said, " and the king gave orders for putting to death

* See Huet. Prop. ix. c. 15. p. 396. et Grot. in Matth. ii. 16.

“ every infant to be found in Bethlehem, and
 “ the king’s messengers killed every infant
 “ according to the royal order *.”

Cedrenus styles Herod “ Παιδοκτονος,”
 “ slayer of children.” The massacre is
 mentioned also by Justin Martyr † and
 Irenæus ‡, who lived in the second, and
 by Origen §, who lived in the third century.
 Upon the whole it appears with respect to
 this cruel sovereign, and others of his
 name, that as Peter and John declared,
 “ The kings of the earth stood up, and the
 “ rulers were gathered together against the
 “ Lord and against his Christ, for of a truth
 “ against his holy child Jesus, whom he had
 “ anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate,
 “ with the Gentiles and the people of Israel
 “ were gathered together, for to do what-
 “ soever his hand and his counsel determined
 “ before to be done ||.”

* Harper’s First Defence of Christianity.

† Dialog. par. ii. p. 307. Edit. Thirlb.

‡ Contra Hær. lib. iii. c. 16. § 4. al. c. 17.

§ Lib. i. p. 47.

|| Acts iv. 26—28.

CHAP. LXI.

Miscellaneous.

THERE are many other Latin writers, besides those whose works have been considered, who might have afforded materials for the enlargement of the present publication. Particulars, which corroborate the truth, or illustrate the records of sacred history, are discoverable in works of less prominent and distinguished character than those from which extracts have been produced ; these, however, may be left to the investigation of those persons who may be disposed to carry on an enquiry ; which, while it leads men to contemplate the ruins of superstition and fable, cannot fail to enable them to discover the proofs of an original foundation in truth. Literature and religion flourish together, and it will appear remarkable to persons who investigate the circumstances connected with such an examination, that of the productions

of antiquity, of which we have any account, those for the most part, have been the best preserved, which relate to periods most important, in a general view of the progress of religion, and which are the best calculated to throw light upon historical and prophetical books.

It deserves also to be considered, that the raising up of distinguished men, at periods in which their testimony was most valuable; and the appointment of circumstances which secured the preservation of evidence, and gave weight to its impression, exhibit what may be reasonably deemed unequivocal proofs of a providential regard to the interests of religion. Thus, for instance, the fragments of the earlier writers, who confirm the statements of the Old Testament, were industriously collected and published, by persons, who lived before or immediately after the promulgation of Christianity; while many of the writers, who attest the accomplishment of prophecy, were themselves either unacquainted with the existence, or denied the authority of our religion. It may be added, that though considerable interruptions and breaks in the chain of ancient history are to be regretted,

yet that a sufficient detail of connection is kept up to demonstrate the truth of almost every statement, on which the claims of Christianity seem to rest. The losses which we bewail, are chiefly those in which our taste and curiosity, rather than our essential interests, are concerned; and certain it is, that the memorials of human learning are every where inscribed with titles in Greek and in Latin, as well as in Hebrew, attesting the validity of our Saviour's pretensions, and the truth of that religion which brought life and immortality to light.

It is related by *Ælius Lampridius*, that the Emperor Alexander Severus wished to erect a temple to Christ, and that Adrian had entertained the same intention, directing buildings to be raised in every city, without images, but had been prevented from executing his design, by those who upon consulting the sacred auspices, had collected, that if what the Emperor required were to take place, all would become Christians, and the heathen temples would be deserted*.

No structure, however, which imperial

* See *Ælius Lampridius de Alexan. Sever. inter Histori. August. Scriptor. vol. 1. p. 994. Edit. Lugd. Batav. 671. Huet. Dem. Evang. § 23. p. 37.*

magnificence could have raised, would have formed a monument more honourable to Christ and his Gospel, than that fabric to which every heathen of eminence has been constrained to contribute, by widening the ground of the evidence of religion, and by conspiring to establish its support, on the immovable basis of literature; and the universal consent of antiquity.

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